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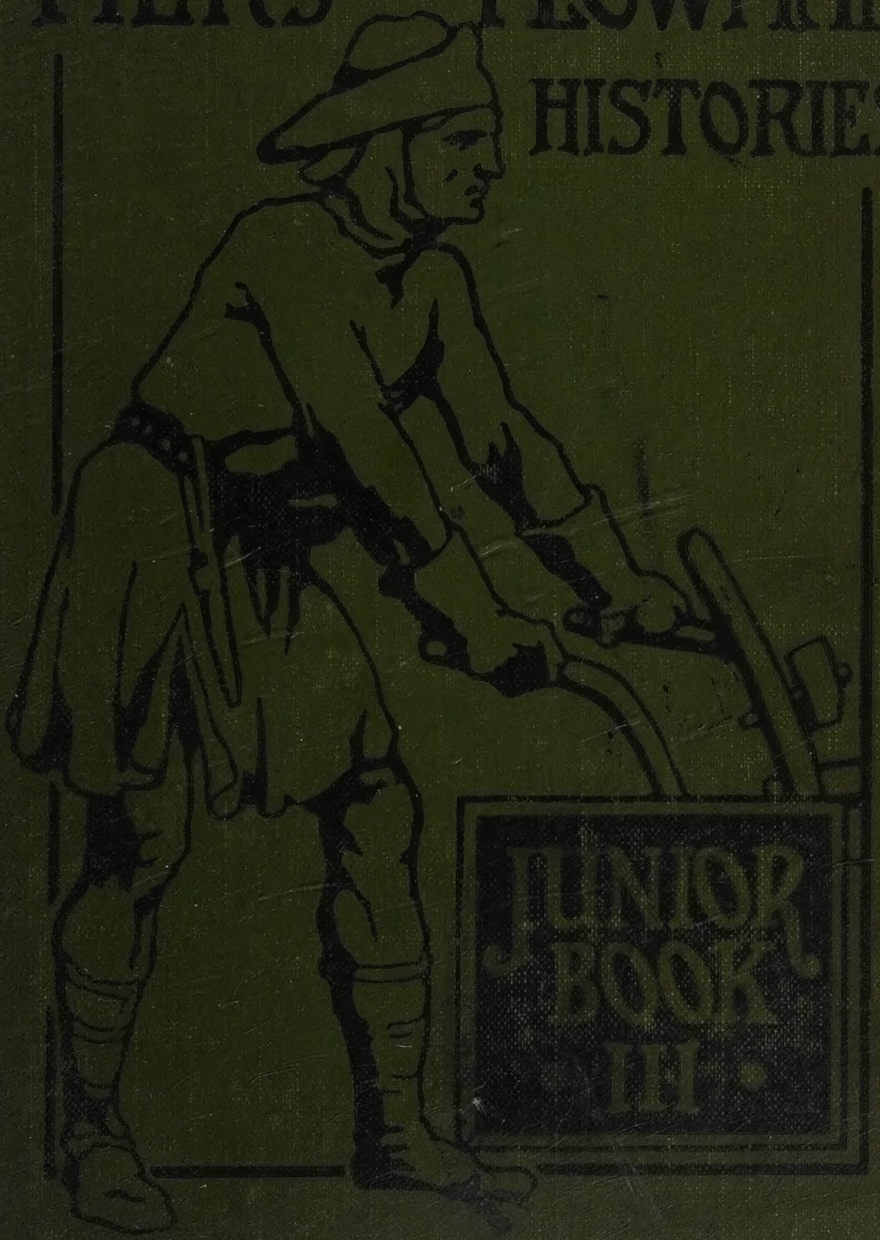

JUNIOR BOOK III

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"A faire felde ful of folke fonde I there bytwene
Of alle maner of men, the mene and the riche,
Worchyng and wandryng, as the worlde asketh."

The Vision of Piers Plowman.

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PREFACE

A POET who lived more than five hundred years ago, at the end of the fourteenth century, tells how on a May morning he wandered forth into the Malvern hills. Wrapped in a rough shepherd's cloak, he lay down and fell asleep. He dreamed that he saw eastwards, towards sunrise, a tower, and Truth was therein ; westwards he saw a deep dale, wherein dwelt Death and wicked spirits ; and between these there lay a Fair Field full of folk, of all manner of men, the mean and the rich. working and wandering as in this world men must.

There were ploughmen toiling on the land, men buying and selling, hermits living alone in cells, lawyers, priests, palmers, and idle folk. Amongst them he saw the king himself. But of all those whom he saw in his dream, Peter, the honest Ploughman—whom he called Piers Plowman—was the chief.

It was a vision of the life of his time ; and when he awoke he wrote the great poem called "The Vision of William concerning Piers Plowman." This poem has given the title to these history books, which tell, as it does, of all manner of men who have worked and wandered in this world of ours.

E. H. S.

GOLDSMITHS' COLLEGE,
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STORIES FROM ENGLISH HISTORY

1066 TO 1805

HEREWARD THE WAKE

MANY hundreds of years ago, there was an English King called Harold. He had not reigned long, before a great Norman Duke came over the sea with an army to England. He conquered and slew Harold at the battle of Hastings; that was a battle which Englishmen never forgot. Then Duke William was made King; but many of the English people hated and feared him.

Far away from London, there lay, in those days, the lonely land of the fens. It was a land so flat that the rain which fell lay on the ground in great wide-stretching sheets of water, instead of flowing to the sea. So flat was it that the river water lingered idly, instead of hurrying on its way. In times of heavy rain, the rivers overflowed their banks and covered the land. Thus all the ground was soft and swampy, and nothing grew but grass and reeds. Fish lived in the rivers, and wild ducks and other

water-birds flew in vast numbers over the land. Here and there a patch of higher ground rose like an island. On these islands the fen-men lived; they sowed corn and other crops where the ground was dry enough; they built wooden causeways, from one island to another, and made deep dykes or ditches to carry off the water. They walked over the soft and swampy ground on high pieces of wood called stilts. In flood-time the crops were often spoiled with water; and near the coast, high tides used to come rushing in, and the cattle and the houses were swept away.

So these fen-men lived fighting the waters, and they were a brave and patient race.

Only the people of that country knew how to cross the lonely fens. For they alone knew where the ground beneath the swamp was firm enough for stilts to rest. And they alone knew the paths over the causeways from island to island. But here and there on some island, larger than the rest, good monks had come and built a monastery; they cared for the poor, and taught the children, and in each monastery they built a church to the glory of God. And round the monastery the fen-men built a little town of wooden houses.

Now there lived in that part a great warrior called "Hereward the Wake." This name was

given to him because he was so watchful and so quick,—one who was never "caught napping." Hereward was tall and strong; his yellow hair streamed over his broad shoulders, and he rode a wondrous mare, called "Swallow" because of her bird-like speed.

News came slowly to the fen country, but at last the fen-men heard how Duke William had slain Harold the King at Senlac. Later, they heard how he had been crowned King of the English at Westminster. But when Hereward heard of the doings of King William, he said to himself, "We in the fen-country will never give in."

So he gathered round him a band of men as brave and as patient as himself, and they waited for a chance of showing King William what they felt towards the Normans.

There was a large monastery in those days in the town of Peterborough, and in November, 1069, the English Abbot died. When King William heard it, he said, "I will have a Norman to rule that house." So, in the following Eastertide, he sent Abbot Turold with a band of armed men to protect him; Turold himself was more a soldier than a monk. But when Hereward heard of the approach of Turold, he and his men sailed up the wide, slow river to the gates of Peterborough town, and sent

a messenger to the monastery to say, "My lord Hereward bids you holy men to side with him against the foreigners, and he will drive away this new Norman Abbot." But the timid monks refused. Then Hereward's men flung fire-brands on to the wooden houses of the town; they burst into the great church of the monastery, and carried away its gold and silver vessels, its gorgeous vestments, and the golden pastoral staff. When Abbot Turold arrived, he found only the stone minster standing among the blackened ruins of the town and the monastery, and one sick brother left alone to welcome him.

When King William heard this, he said, "I will fight against those fen-men till they know that I am King."

But Hereward and his men betook them to the Isle of Ely. This was the largest in all that country, and on it a big monastery stood. The island rose up steeply from the marsh around; it had deep dykes on three sides, and on the fourth, a dyke with a causeway over it, so narrow that only a few men could cross at once. On the island, corn was grown, and there were waterfowl, and wild geese to be killed for food, and fish in the dykes. Hereward and his men lived in the monastery there, and ate their meals side by side with the

monks. And they waited to see what William would do.

At length news came that William had marched from London, and had made a camp at Cambridge, about fifteen miles away. Hereward determined to find out how many Normans there were, and whether they were well armed, so that he might be able the better to fight against them. So one night he set off in disguise alone from Ely to visit the Norman camp. He tied up mare Swallow, where she could not be seen, and she kept quite still till he returned. Then Hereward crept stealthily over to the Norman tents, till he could see the soldiers sitting round their camp fire, and could listen to all they said. When the dawn began to come, he leapt on mare Swallow's back, and shouted into the night, "A Wake! A Wake!" as he galloped swiftly back to Ely. And a second and a third time he did this, and once he even saw William himself and heard him discussing how to fight the fen-men.

Soon the Normans attacked the town, but could not take it. Time after time they tried, but in vain. At last they built a tower on one of the wooden causeways leading to the island, and placed within it an old woman who, they said, was a witch; they thought she would overcome the

HEREWARD CREPT STEALTHILY OVER TO THE NORMAN TENTS, TILL HE COULD SEE THEM SITTING ROUND THEIR CAMP FIRE.

English by her spells, when they came up to the tower. Thus they thought the English would not be able to prevent the Normans from crossing the causeway. The Normans began to cross, hoping that the English would come out to meet them. But no English came. The Normans pressed forward wondering; they were almost within the island,—when behold! from the reed-beds beneath the causeway, came smoke and crackling flames. The English had crept across the swamp, and had set fire to the reeds. The Normans tried to rush back; they pressed one upon another; they stumbled, and cursed, and struggled. The smoke rose stifling and blinding them; the flames crackled and scorched; tower, and witch, and fighting men fell into the burning reed-beds.

But there was treachery within the island of Ely. The monks were not willing to go on fighting, and they sent a secret messenger to tell the Normans that they would give the place up. Soon, Hereward and his men found out what the monks had done, and they were very wroth. They took to their boats and sailed down the river and out into the open sea. They had fought bravely for the freedom of the English. But it was of no avail.

By this time, all over England the English had submitted to the Normans. For there was no

English prince fit to be a king. They remembered the story which their grandfathers had told them of Edmund Ironside and Canute the Dane. They knew how, when Edmund Ironside died, and there was no English prince fit to reign, Canute the Dane had brought peace to the land. They trusted William the Norman to do the same.

We do not know for certain what became of Hereward afterwards; but men say that he and King William became friends after all, and that Hereward was given lands in central England. And this is likely to be true, because King William was wise enough to know that the best way of getting rid of an enemy is to turn him into a friend; and Hereward saw that England was going to be ruled by a strong man who would keep order and do justice.

THE STORY OF THE EMPRESS MATILDA

After the death of the first Norman King, William I., his two sons ruled in turn. The younger of these was King Henry I.

Now King Henry had a little daughter named Matilda ; she was sometimes called Maud for short. When she was little, she lived in the Palace at Westminster. There was a garden behind the Palace, full of trees and flowers ; and the garden stretched down to the river Thames. A stream flowed beside the garden into the river Thames. Here Maud used to play with her younger brother William, and her cousin Stephen. Although they were boys, she was so strong-willed that she generally got her own way.

When she was eight years old, her mother told her that she was to go away from home to be married to the Emperor of Germany. Matilda cried at first, but presently thought it would be rather grand to be an Empress.

One dull February day, she left the Palace at Westminster, riding on a small white horse. Her mother cried when she kissed her, but Matilda was too excited to cry. Her old nurse went with her, and many English lords; they rode to London Bridge, where a ship was waiting on the high tide. Great bales of luggage, holding Matilda's beautiful clothes, were stowed away on the ship. Then the sails were set, and they passed down the river and out across the steel-grey sea, till no land was to be seen. After many days of tossing on the sea, they sailed up a broad river mouth, the Rhine, till they came to the town of Utrecht.

Here little Matilda had to go to the Cathedral to be crowned. The Archbishop looked very grand in his mitre and gold-embroidered robes; Matilda wondered whether the Emperor would look like that, for she had heard he was forty years old.

After this, Matilda had to live in a convent, and be taught to speak and write the German language and to work embroidery. Then, when she was fifteen, she went to live with the Emperor to whom she had been married long before, and she soon became very fond of him; they lived happily together for a few years, but when she was twenty-three, he died.

Now while Matilda was living in Germany, sad

and terrible news came to her from England. Her

LITTLE MATILDA HAD TO GO TO THE CATHEDRAL TO BE CROWNED.

only brother, William, had been drowned in

crossing the English Channel, and her father, King Henry, was stricken with grief. For now he had no child left except Matilda, and no son to rule after him. When her husband died, her father sent for her to come to England.

As yet no woman had ever ruled England as Queen. But at Christmastide, King Henry held a great Council of all his Bishops and Barons in the Castle of Windsor; he forced them all to swear that Matilda should be Queen of England after his death. She sat in a great oaken chair covered with gold-embroidered cloth. Each bishop and baron had to come forward in turn. The first man to come forward was her cousin Stephen, now called Count of Blois. Stephen was, next to Matilda, the nearest relative to Henry. He knelt down before her, put both his hands between hers, and said, "Lady, I swear to be your man, and to serve you with life and limb." But in his heart Stephen said: "I need not keep this oath, because I have been forced to swear it." For Stephen hoped to be King himself, since no woman had yet ruled as Queen in England.

After this, King Henry arranged that Matilda should marry a Frenchman, Count Geoffrey of Anjou. So she went over to France, and was married on a sunny day in June. Her bridegroom

was a tall, slender man, fair and ruddy. When they went home to his castle, the citizens swarmed in the narrow streets of the town, carrying banners and lighted torches.

But after all Matilda was not happy with Geoffrey. And because she was not happy, she became proud and hard ; she began to wish that the time would come for her to be Queen of England. At last, a little son was born to her, and he was christened Henry after his grandfather.

Soon after this King Henry died. Count Stephen was in France, and before the news reached Matilda he sailed across to England to make himself King. The citizens of London poured out over London Bridge to meet him, and shouted with joy as they walked by his horse's side. The next day they held a solemn meeting, and decided to make Stephen king. And some of the great nobles of England broke their promise to Henry and followed Stephen. But many of them did not wish to follow Stephen, so when he was crowned at Westminster there were not many people present, and the great church was dark, and chill, and silent. As yet, however, Matilda did not come to England. She waited till the great barons who were her friends should be ready to help her.

Troubles soon arose. King Stephen could not

keep order in the land, since so many great barons would not own him King. So there was fighting and much misery.

Then Matilda thought her time had come. She crossed over with her half-brother, Robert of Gloucester, and landed on the Sussex coast. She rode across the low marsh-land, where the cattle were feeding in the September mist, and climbed the steep street of Arundel town. Then she rode across England, for many days, to Gloucester. In a few weeks a great battle was fought, and King Stephen was taken prisoner by Earl Robert's men, and brought before Matilda. She looked at him in silence, haughtily ; then she said to her men-at-arms : " Take him to Bristol Castle, and guard him well."

Then, Matilda thought she could become Queen. She rode to London, and entered the city with a few nobles and soldiers. There were no joyful shouts, for the citizens of London loved Stephen. Most of the people stared at her out of the high houses and whispered together. She rode with her head very high, and stared coldly about her.

But the citizens knew that Stephen was a prisoner, and that Matilda had the power to help or harm them. So the next day citizens went to her in Westminster Palace to ask her to rule them

justly ; but she frowned upon them, and spoke harshly. She said they must give her money. And when they implored her to wait for it, she burst into a great rage, and told her soldiers to go and burn the citizens' houses. Then the citizens were very angry ; they assembled in a great mob, and surrounded the palace while Matilda was at dinner ; angry shouts filled the air. Brave as she was, Matilda called for her swiftest horse, and, with a few servants, she galloped off to Oxford.

Now, the people of England really wanted Stephen again rather than Matilda. Stephen was set free, and he began to besiege Matilda in Oxford Castle. Winter had set in ; the river below the castle was frozen ; food was very scarce. Matilda decided to try to escape. One night, very late, she and three of her knights got ready. There was a small window at the top of a tower, just large enough for one person to get through. They fastened a long rope to an iron ring in the wall, and threw out the other end. A knight went down first ; then another ; then Matilda herself got ready to go down. The third soldier helped her up to the window ; she seized the rope, squeezed through the opening, and began to slip down, down, down. The rope cut her hands till they bled. She was glad when her feet touched the cold snow beneath. Then the third soldier went down. They walked

stealthily and in silence. Quite close, they saw the enemies' fires, and heard the snorting of their

DRESSED IN WHITE THEY CAME SAFELY TO THE RIVER.

horses. Once, they thought footsteps followed them; Matilda's heart beat fast; she did not

feel cold. Thus, dressed in white, they came safely to the river and began to cross. Here and there the ice cracked ; it was too dark to see where they walked, and the snow on the ice was deep. At last, they reached the opposite bank: panting and trembling, but still strong on her feet, Matilda grasped the branches of trees to help her up the slippery bank. Then they walked quickly across the snowy fields to a village six miles away. Here they got horses and rode swiftly to the convent of Abingdon, where she was safe.

For a time fighting still went on, but when Earl Robert of Gloucester died, Matilda gave up the struggle.

It was agreed between her and Stephen that he should reign for his lifetime, and that her son Henry should be king of England after his death. It was this Henry who became the great King Henry II. of England. Matilda herself went back to France, and lived in Normandy with her husband for the rest of her life.

THE STORY OF RICHARD I. AT THE CRUSADE

When King Henry II. died, his son Richard was crowned as King Richard I. He was thirty-two years old. He was very tall and well-made, with long arms and legs; his body was stronger than that of most men; he had ruddy hair and blue eyes. He loved fighting for its own sake, for he was restless and adventurous, and he wanted to make himself known in the world. He gave away his money freely when he had any, but when he was in want of it, he did not care how he forced the people of England to give it to him.

Two years before Richard became king, the Turks had taken Jerusalem from the Christians. The Turkish leader was called Saladin, and though he was not a Christian, so gentle-hearted and merciful was he that at the taking of the Holy City he ordered that no citizen should be killed. He loved to fight for the sake of his own religion, but not for

the sake of fighting. He led a simple life with few pleasures, and he was very fond of children.

But the Christians in Europe were bitterly ashamed and angry that Jerusalem had been won back by the Turks. It had been taken from the Turks by the first Crusaders after terrible sufferings and losses, and now it seemed as though the Turks were really the stronger, after all. Thousands of men vowed they would never rest till they had won it back again. Richard of England was among them, also King Philip of France. These two kings met in France, each with a large army, and they sailed to Messina in Sicily. Here they camped. The sun's rays poured down upon that sandy shore; a hot haze covered the deep blue sea. Outside the camp, King Richard ordered all thieves and wrong-doers to be hanged. But Philip of France let such men go free. Therefore the soldiers called him "The Lamb," but Richard they called "The Lion." Then they set sail for Palestine, and had a stormy voyage. Philip was miserable in his tossing ship, but Richard was "as hale and strong on sea as on shore."

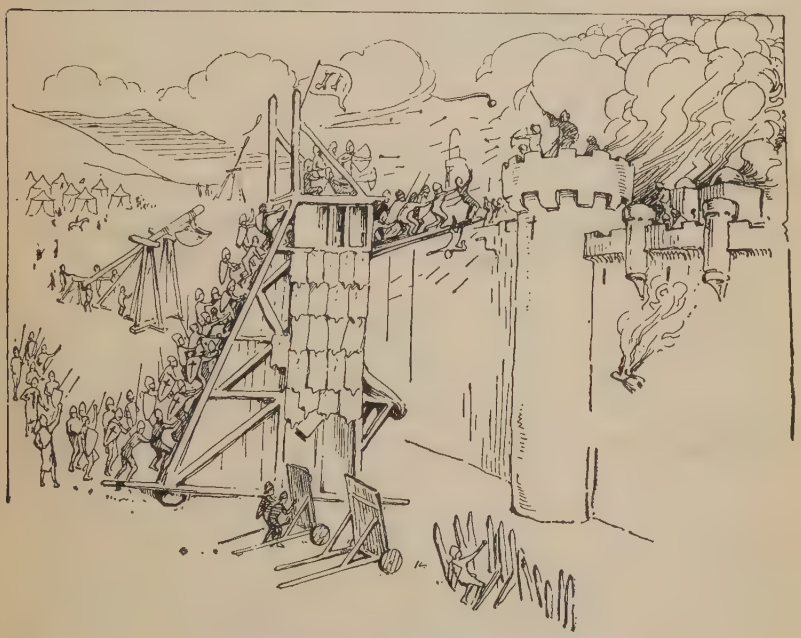
One day, they saw a line of coast before them in the distance; the soldiers and sailors shouted for joy. Presently a high tower appeared against the sky-line; then great walls could be seen; this was

the town of Acre which the Christians were trying to take from the Turks. As they drew near they could see the Christian camp along the coast, and on the mountains beyond the city thousands of white tents of the Turkish army. King Richard and all his men were rowed in small boats to the shore. He was welcomed with shouts of joy, and the noise of trumpets. That night the army feasted and drank, and torches blazed so that the Turks thought the whole valley was in flames.

Acre was a hard city to take, because the walls and turrets were so strong; the sea was on three sides of it, and on the fourth, the mountains. Every day there was fighting. Sometimes the Crusaders tried to climb the walls, and the Turks tried to drive them away with bundles of burning wood; sometimes great stones were hurled into the town, and arrows rained on the besiegers. The Crusaders dug holes beneath the walls and filled these with burning logs.

King Richard fell sick soon after he arrived, and while he was getting well, he invented a sort of iron hurdle to shield the fighting men. Hundreds of these were made, and soon, though he was still ill and suffering, he came and sat on a silken cushion with the hurdle above him, and shot bolts from his cross-bow into the town. Then he promised two

gold pieces to every man who would pull stones from a certain tower ; at last the tower fell crashing down. The Crusaders' stones never ceased battering against the walls, and the Turkish fire was hurled back at them with a noise like thunder, and a flame like lightning.



THE FIGHTING AT THE WALLS OF ACRE.

One day the Sultan Saladin, in his tent up there on the mountains, saw a Turk coming towards him quite naked and dripping with water. He gave a letter to Saladin and said, " My lord, I have swum up the river from the town, with this letter in my

mouth." The message was from the Turks in Acre, begging the Sultan to let them give up the town to the Crusaders. So Saladin called his generals together in council. But as they talked, one cried out suddenly, "My lord, I see the banners of the Christians upon the walls; I see that hateful sign of the cross; I see fires of joy on the ramparts." It was true. Acre had been entered by the Christians, and the Turks fled.

King Richard began to rebuild the city walls, making them higher than ever before. He used to walk round amid the workmen and encourage them with brave, kind words.

But Philip of France fell sick, and all his courage failed him. He made his ships ready, and sailed back to France. In truth, he was jealous of King Richard, for all men spoke well of the English King

Then the Crusading host was ordered to march southward along the coast, and the ships were ordered to sail by the shore near the army. On board was put food for ten days; wine and bread, biscuits and flour, and flesh-meat. It was August, and terribly hot; the soldiers had to carry much baggage, but they marched in the early mornings only, and halted sometimes for a whole day. Richard knew he must not overwork his men. The Turks hung about their road, and beset them like

swarms of insects. Saladin was there himself on horseback, and often the air was black with dust and with flying arrows. At last the Crusaders charged upon them, Richard leading them on. None whom his sword touched escaped. To right and left the Turks fell away from the arm of the terrible King; and the great host broke and scattered. Three days later the Crusaders entered the town of Jaffa.

Here the whole army rested among shady gardens, and feasted on delicious fruits. They were not idle, however, for the town ditch had to be cleared and the walls rebuilt.

Many other battles were fought later. In one, King Richard's horse was killed, and he had to fight on foot. When Saladin heard this, he sent to the English King two splendid Arab chargers, saying it was not meet for so great a man to be unhorsed.

Most of all, the Crusaders longed to take Jerusalem. But winter was coming on with storms of rain and hail. Their bread and bacon were soaked with wet, their arms were rusted, their clothes worn threadbare.

In spring they began to advance on the Holy City, "rejoicing like birds at the dawn of day." The Turks were terribly afraid. Even Saladin

called for his swiftest horses. When little children were crying, their mothers said, "Hush! hush! the King of England is coming."

But as the Crusaders marched, many troubles arose. The Frenchmen began to quarrel with the English because they were jealous of them, and hundreds deserted the camp. Then news came to Richard that his brother John, in England, was stirring up the King of France against him. Worst of all, they heard that Saladin was building strong new walls to the city of Jerusalem; that he had blocked up all the wells so that they could get no water, and that there was no food in the country round the city.

Nevertheless, Richard determined to journey on, and see if these things were true; and as he journeyed, he saw that his army could not live long in that deserted land.

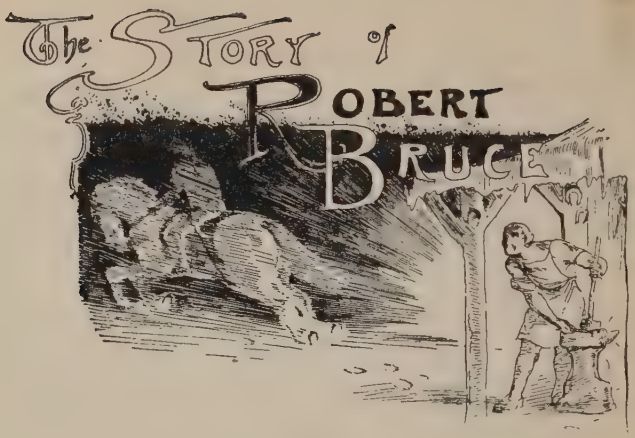
Suddenly, from the crest of a hill, he and his knights caught sight of the white domes of the Holy City in the distance, and he realized he could never reach it. Then they all bowed their heads, and one knight fell on his knees in prayer. And Richard himself hid his face, and burst into tears, crying out, "Fair Lord God, let me not look upon the Holy City if I may not deliver it from Thine enemies."

After this, the Crusaders turned and marched back to the coast, weary and sore at heart. At Jaffa, Richard fell very sick. When Saladin heard of this, he was grieved, and he sent to Richard presents of wine and ice; Richard sent falcons in return.

At last Richard set sail for home from Acre; all the people wept to see him go.

And when he reached home, he found his kingdom in great disorder. There was no money left in his exchequer, his ministers were ruling as they pleased; his subjects were unruly and disloyal.

Thus, Richard had failed in his life's work; for he had neglected his kingdom for the sake of a great deed of arms which he thought religious, but that great deed he had not been allowed to carry out.



Long ago, in the days of King Edward I., England and Scotland were separate nations ruled each by its own king. But King Edward wanted to conquer Scotland and make the two nations one. For he was a great King and loved England, and he thought that England would be more peaceful if Scotland were joined to it. But the Scots loved Scotland every bit as much as Edward loved England; and they hated the thought of English rule.

Now, the King of Scotland died, and there was no one to succeed him. So Edward thought his own time had come. But there was living at the English Court a certain lord, named Robert the Bruce, who was half a Scotchman, and whose grandfather had nearly become King of Scotland in past days. This man determined to lead the Scots against the English.

III From the crest of the hill he caught sight of the Holy City (*page* 24)

It was a January evening in the year 1306 ; snow lay deep on the ground. In the great hall of the Palace of Westminster, King Edward sat at supper with his nobles, and Robert Bruce was there. A log fire blazed beneath the opening in the roof, and torches burned in brackets on the walls ; flickering lights and shadows played about the table and the faces of the guests.

It chanced that Bruce sat facing the door ; it was half open, as the serving men passed in and out. Suddenly, as he looked towards it, he saw the eyes of a stranger fixed upon him, and the look seemed to say, "I must speak with you secretly." Bruce dropped his eyes and went on eating and drinking as if nothing had happened ; the stranger disappeared. Supper went on ; the wine was passed freely ; the nobles drank and drank. But Bruce only pretended to drink ; he quietly emptied glass after glass upon the floor of the hall. After a time the King retired to rest, and the other nobles got more and more sleepy till the hall was very quiet. Then Bruce went out softly ; he opened the door into the court-yard and waited, looking at the star-lit sky. Suddenly a figure stood before him—that of the stranger whom he had seen during supper ; he felt a small packet pushed into his hand. It was heavy and sewed up in linen. Silently Bruce went back into the Palace. Then, in a quiet corner

of the hall, he opened the packet, and found in it a pair of spurs, and twelve copper pennies. He understood these as a signal; they meant "Flee for your life." So Bruce found his servant and said, "Fetch me my horse. But first take him to the forge and get him shod with his shoes pointing the wrong way."

Then Bruce put on his mail-shirt, with a woollen surcoat over it, and a close leather cap. Before an hour had passed, he was galloping over the noiseless snow, along the great north road that led to Scotland. It was a long journey, through lonely forest country, and over trackless hills. Day after day he rode, and at last he crossed the border into Scotland.

When the Scotch nobles heard that he had reached Scotland, many of them gathered round him, and they promised to be true to him, if he would be their King, and defend Scotland against King Edward. Therefore in the month of March he was crowned King of Scotland, as Robert I.

Now, Edward I. was old and very sick, but, when this news reached him, he set out with an army towards Scotland. He had to be carried in a litter behind his men, but his spirit never failed. At last, near Carlisle, he reached a little village from which, across the Solway Firth, he could see the

hills of that Scotland which he longed to conquer. Here he rested for a night. But in the morning, as he tried to rise, he fell back, dead.

His young son, Edward II., now became King after him, and the English army pressed on to meet and conquer Bruce. Bruce had not enough men to meet the English, so he fled with his followers to the hills and forests. He and his men slept in caves, and shot wild deer for food, and caught fish in the streams ; sometimes they begged oatmeal from a cottage. The English went out in small bands to hunt him down, and he knew not from day to day when he might be caught.

For one whole winter Bruce and his men had to live on a barren island off the sea-coast, and suffered much from want of food. One night, when they were almost famished, Bruce and a few men rowed to the mainland where there was a castle held by English soldiers, for they hoped that by good luck they might seize some food. They saw a small ship anchored not far from land, and a little boat being rowed ashore. So they hid in the bushes, and they soon saw the English jump from the boat, and bring ashore casks of wine and bales of food. Then the Scots sprang from their hiding-place, killed the soldiers, and took the supplies away with them. Thus they lived through the long dark winter.

But, in the spring, Bruce determined to go back to the mainland, in spite of danger. First he sent over a man called Cuthbert, and told him that if he found the people friendly, he must light a beacon on a high cliff which could be seen from the island. For a few days Bruce and his men watched the headland anxiously. Suddenly, one night they saw a blaze upon it; so they rowed across with all their goods and landed before day-break. Cuthbert met them; he looked pale and scared. "Alas! my lord," he said, "I did not light the beacon. The farmers hereabout are burning the heather, so that grass may grow for pasture for their sheep. This place is not safe for you; it swarms with English and with unfriendly Scots; in yonder village lie three hundred English soldiers." And he pointed to a little village near the cliff-edge. Then Bruce and his men talked together, and they said, "We will stay here and fight our way." So they agreed to creep silently to the village where the English soldiers lay, and surprise them in their sleep.

It was still nearly dark; they set out towards the village up the steep cliff-path. They wore soft deer-skin shoes, which made no sound as they trod; and each man carried his sword blade so that it could not rattle in the sheath. Thus they came silently as wild-cats upon the cottages where the English soldiers lay. Then, with a fearful war-cry, they

burst into the dwellings and cut to pieces the sleeping men. When they had loaded themselves with food, they made off into the hills.

Then the leader of the English tried a new plan for catching Bruce. He got possession of a beautiful dog, called a blood-hound, which had once belonged to Bruce. He knew that it would track out its old master. A party of soldiers set out with the hound in leash ; at the edge of a forest, it came suddenly on the trail of Bruce. With a mighty bay, it galloped forward, nose to the ground. The breathless English could scarcely keep pace with it, so eager was it to find its dear master. Suddenly through the trees came a whizzing sound ; a yell of agony came from the hound ; then it rolled over, dying, with an arrow through its heart. Bruce was not far ahead ; he had seen the soldiers pursuing him ; and his companion had sent the arrow. Now, they fled onwards, and reached an open moor where they could hide in the deep purple heather, safe from their pursuers. They waited till the voices of the English had died away, and then they crept out of hiding.

After this, more men gathered round Bruce, and slowly but surely, he began to win back all Scotland. At last, after years of toil, only one castle, Stirling, was held by the English. Then King Edward II.

brought a mighty army to help Stirling. Bruce also gathered a great host.

The two armies met on the banks of the Bannock Burn. Here, the ground was dangerous with marshes and pools; also Bruce dug deep pits in front of his lines to trap the English horses.

Now the Scots had few horse-soldiers, but a great body of spearmen. The English had thousands of mounted knights. The Scots waited, silent: the English charged up the slope towards them. Some horses fell into the pits, some floundered in the marshes; others reached the Scotch lines. "And when the great steeds of the knights dashed into the Scotch spears, there arose a horrible crash from rending lances and dying horses; and they stood locked together for a space." Then the English moved back, leaving hundreds of dead. Again they charged, and again, and again; but always to turn back in confusion.

At last they could advance no more, for a bank of dead men and horses blocked their path. Then the Scots raised Bruce's war-cry, and rushed down upon the English, hewing and slashing at them. There was terrible slaughter, and King Edward fled from the field.

Thus were the English driven out of Scotland. By Bruce's patience and Bruce's skill the land was once more free.

THE STORY OF RICHARD II. AND WAT TYLER

Sixty-three years after Robert Bruce defeated Edward II. at the Battle of Bannockburn, a little boy of eleven became King of England. His name was Richard, and he was the son of Edward the Black Prince, and grandson of the old King Edward III. The English people loved him, and hoped that he would grow up to be as good and brave as his father.

In those days most of the people of England lived in the country instead of living in towns. They had land of their own on which they grew corn to make bread; they had cows from which they got milk, butter and meat; they had pigs from which they got pork and bacon without having to buy these things from a shop.

Yet they were not happy; for the King's uncle who ruled the country while Richard was a boy, made them pay very heavy taxes, and the lord of

every village made the poor men work for him. They had to plough his fields, sow his corn, and get in his harvest, and often, while they worked for him, their own hay and corn was spoilt by the rain.

"WHY SHOULD SOME MEN BE POOR AND OTHERS RICH?"

So it happened that about the time that Richard became King, the people in the villages began to say to one another, "Why should we be poor when some men are rich? When God made the world He made all men alike. Adam and Eve did not have

to work for any one." Sometimes strangers came to the village—a priest with black gown and shaven head, or a countryman with bare dusty feet and short woollen tunic. These men would stand on the step of the stone cross in the churchyard on Sunday, and as folk came out of church, they would ask them the same question, "Why should some men be poor and others rich?"

One day, men came from London, from the King's uncle, saying that every one must pay another tax. Then the villagers began to think, "If only King Richard knew how poor we are, he would not let his uncle take our money; and he would not let the lord of our village make us work in his fields, when our own beasts need tending, and our own harvest is ripe." And one man said this to another on the way to work in the morning, and the second said it to a third, as they went home to their mud cottages at night, till at last everybody was saying the same thing, all over Kent and Essex, and all the counties near London. At last, one June day, without any one quite knowing how it happened, the people from all the villages of Kent began to march towards London to find the King. Because they were afraid the rich men would try to stop them, they took with them old bows and arrows, and old rusty swords. Some men who had no swords or bows took pitch-forks and scythes.

When they came to Maidstone, a man called Wat Tyler said he would lead them to the King. As they marched, with Wat at their head, more and more men joined them. They did no harm to poor folk as they passed, but when they came to a rich man's snug wooden house with cows in the fields, and corn in the barns, they grew angry, and drove away the cows and set fire to the house.

So they marched for six days until they came to Blackheath. To-day, the houses stretch from Blackheath over six long miles to London Bridge, but [illegible] came there they could hardly see any houses—only the wild heath sloping steeply down, and far below, the shining mud and water of the marshes, and the river Thames winding through them like a silver [illegible].

The road led across the marshes to London Bridge. In those days this was the only bridge leading into London, and to get on to it one had to pass a great gate, which was shut at night. Also, the middle part of the bridge could be lifted up, if need be, so that people could not get across. Now, when the men of London heard that the Kentish men were coming to the city, and that they had burned houses on the way, they were much afraid. They closed the gate on the further side and lifted up the middle of their bridge, and Wat

Tyler's men had to turn round and go back to Blackheath. Here they had nothing to eat or drink, but as night fell they made great fires of dry gorse, whose glare across the river frightened the Londoners in their beds.

All next day, the men of Kent waited, hungry and thirsty. At last, towards evening, some one came and said that the bridge had been let down. Then, with a great shout they moved once more towards London, and streamed across the bridge into the narrow streets of wooden houses. Many of the poor folk of L[illegible] at their doors to welcome the strangers, for they too hated the rich. They brought out cakes of bread and jugs of ale for them, and the streets seemed full of peasants, eating and drinking and gazing about.

In the mean [illegible], all the rich citizens had shut themselves up in their houses, and the great lords had taken the King to the Tower for safety. People peeped with anxious faces through their lattice windows to see what the country folk would do. At first, all was quiet, but for the tramping of feet, and the sound of many voices. Then some one saw the splendid house of the King's uncle, and because they hated him, the people piled wood against it. A torch was set to the wood, it caught fire, and great flames went crackling up to the sky.

Soon the whole house was in a blaze. Then more houses were burnt. For two nights the sky was red with flames.

All this time King Richard was safe in the Tower. Although he was only a boy he was not afraid, and when the second morning came he sent to Wat Tyler, saying he would speak with the people outside the city. First he rode to Westminster Abbey, and asked God to take care of him, and to help him to speak wisely. Then he went to Smithfield, where he had promised to meet Wat and his men.

Smithfield was a great open field of green grass with elm-trees, lying just outside the walls which in those days lay round London town. It was close to the Monastery of St. Bartholomew. Here, on Fridays, the citizens of London were wont to buy and sell cattle and horses; and here knights and nobles held tournaments, and fought sham battles in sport. In this great open space it seemed well to Richard to meet the crowd of poor folk, rather than in the narrow streets of the town.

The King and his lords rode there on horseback, and sat on their horses on one side of the field; Wat's men stood in rows on the other. When the King had asked the people what they wanted, Wat rode forward into the middle of the field. First, he

sprang from his horse and bowed very low; then he shook the King's hand. This was very rude, and so was much that Wat said. One of the King's men grew angry, and called out that Wat was a robber. Then Wat smote at the King's man with his knife. He could not hurt him because he wore armour beneath his gown, but one man drew his sword and struck Wat and wounded him to death. A great shout of rage rose from the people. Many seized arrows and bent their bows ready to shoot the King. Then Richard rode out alone into the middle of the field, crying, "Sirs, will ye shoot your King? I will be your chief and captain, you shall have from me what you seek. Only follow me!"

When he had said this, he rode slowly towards the country, and all the people followed him. Out in the cornfields Richard promised these village folk that he would try to do what they wanted. As he finished speaking, men came from London bringing soldiers to shoot down the country folk, but Richard forbade them, for the people had trusted him. So the men of Kent went back to their villages comforted because they had seen their King.

Richard returned to London, where his mother had waited all day in fear. When she saw her son

HE RODE SLOWLY TOWARDS THE COUNTRY, AND ALL THE PEOPLE FOLLOWED HIM.

alive, she threw her arms about him, crying, "Ah, fair son, what pain and anguish have I had for you this day!" To whom Richard answered, "Certes, madam, I know it well. But now rejoice and praise God, for to-day I have recovered my heritage that was lost, and the realm of England also."

About five hundred years ago, there lived in a village in Eastern France a little girl called Joan of Arc. Domremy lay in an open country, through which ran a wide river; vines grew on the gentle hill-slopes. Joan's father had large flocks of sheep, which her brothers tended. After the shearing of the sheep, great bundles of wool were stored away in their house. Every morning, Joan and her sisters used to help their mother in the house; they clattered over the stone floors in their wooden shoes, and watched the great pot of vegetables simmering over the clear wood fire. About mid-day, the father and brothers came in for a meal. When it was finished and cleared away, the mother

and little daughters sat down to other work. They spun the wool into yarn for their woollen frocks and their stockings, or they spun flax into thread for shirts. And when the rougher work was finished, the mother brought out a roll of pure white silk and spread it on the clean wooden table; and she taught Joan to embroider on it figures of the saints in gorgeous colours and in gold and silver thread. This work Joan loved above all, and she loved too the stories of the saints which their mother told them while they worked.

Every morning Joan got up early, when she heard the bell ringing from the little grey church. She ran along under the trees, and knelt down to pray where she could look up at the stained glass window with the figure of St. Michael. In summer time the sun came streaming through the window, and Joan used to pray specially to St. Michael, as the light fell on his gleaming sword and shining armour, and the dragon coiled about his mailed feet.

But it was not all peace and happiness at Domremy. At that time the English had invaded France, and King Henry VI. of England called himself the King of France. Even some Frenchmen were fighting for the King of England. In Maxey, the next village to Domremy, every one was for the English, so that the children of the two

SHE KNELT DOWN TO PRAY WHERE SHE COULD LOOK UP AT THE STAINED GLASS WINDOW WITH THE FIGURE OF ST. MICHAEL.

villages used to quarrel about it. Thus the poor land of France was torn asunder. The Frenchman who should have been King, the Dauphin Charles, was timid and idle; he would not fight for his heritage. Once, when Joan was quite little, Domremy had been entered by cruel soldiers, and all the people had had to flee for their lives; and still, sometimes, waggons filled with wounded men used to pass through the village. Joan and her mother often took out wine and food to the soldiers, and linen to bind up their wounds; and often the men talked about the fighting and the suffering in the land. So Joan used to think about these things, and pray that poor France might be at peace.

When she was thirteen, a strange thing happened. It was a summer afternoon; there was a great stillness everywhere as Joan sat sewing before the house-door. Suddenly, there seemed to come a great light from out of the trees, and a soft voice with it, which said, "Joan, be a good child; go often to church." This startled Joan, but it did not frighten her. After a few days, the voice came again; and later on she used to see the forms of the saints floating in heavenly light. Then one day, St. Michael himself appeared, and he said: "Joan, you must go to help the Dauphin Charles of France; you must win his kingdom back for him,

and have him crowned King." Then indeed Joan wept and trembled. "Sire, I am but a poor girl," she cried. "I cannot ride nor fight." But St. Michael told her how she must begin. Joan told nobody; life became very serious to her, and her soul was full of trouble. At all hours of the day and night, voices came to her, and the message was always the same.

Thus four years passed away; slowly but steadily Joan began to face this fact, that God had laid upon her a great and solemn duty. Then at last, she felt the time had come.

It was March, 1429; she was a tall strong girl with long dark hair and dark eyes. She went to stay with her uncle in a village near Domremy, and she told him her secret. He was a kind and religious man, and promised to help her. He went with her to a well-known captain of soldiery, called Baudricourt. This man laughed at Joan at first, and spoke to her as if she were a foolish child, but when she spoke firmly of God's message to her, he also determined to help. So Baudricourt sent a message to ask the Dauphin Charles to see Joan; and after ten days, Charles sent answer that he would. Then one February morning, Joan set out on horseback, dressed as a page, in tunic, long breeches, and high spurred boots; two gentlemen whom she

trusted rode with her, and a messenger sent by the King. After eleven days, they reached Chinon where Charles had a palace, and climbed the steep streets to their lodging. Two days later, Joan was sent for to the palace ; she went in her page's dress of black and grey. She was taken into a large room lit up by fifty flaming torches. It was full of lords and ladies gorgeously dressed ; but one tall young man was in plainer clothes than the others. And when all the courtiers stared and laughed at Joan's strange appearance, she took no heed of them, but walked straight to this tall young man, and knelt down before him. "Gentle Dauphin," she said, "I am Joan the Maid. I am sent by the King of Heaven to tell you that you shall be crowned at Rheims." After that there was no more laughing, for Dauphin Charles saw she was clear-sighted and strong-willed.

The first thing to be done was to help the town of Orleans, which was being besieged by the English. Joan was given a sword in a crimson velvet sheath, and a banner of white linen on which was worked a figure of Jesus Christ. She wore a suit of shining white armour, above which rose her uncovered head with its flowing dark hair. Thus they set out for Orleans ; priests and choristers singing psalms marched before the army ; the rough soldiers

obeyed Joan gladly, and her loud clear voice was often heard giving commands to all.

The town of Orleans lay in a wide plain, on the northern bank of the river Loire. The English had built strong towers at some points outside the city, and the strongest lay beyond the bridge on the south of the river. When they heard of the coming of the wonderful maid, they only laughed, and did not try to stop her. They even let her bring fresh provisions into the town, and the French generals came out to meet her.

In the dusk of an April evening she entered the place ; the citizens gathered in the streets, holding torches ; their light flickered on the shining figure of the maid, and on the armour of the soldiers marching by her.

Now, the thing that Joan set herself to do was to drive the English away from the river bank on the south of the town ; but for a few days Joan did not fight. She talked over with the French officers a plan for driving the English back, and she visited the troops to see that all was ready.

On the next Sunday afternoon, Joan fell asleep, after a busy morning among the soldiers. Suddenly, she woke and cried, " Our soldiers' blood is flowing. My voices tell me so. My arms ! my arms ! " She shouted for her page, who was idling ;

she put on her armour hurriedly, and mounted her horse ; her page thrust into her hand the staff of her banner. Then she set spurs to her horse, and dashed along the narrow paved streets "so that fire flashed from the stones under the horse's feet." She found some French captains leading their men against the English, because they did not want to be led by "the Maid" ; but when she came flashing among them they were forced to obey her ; and all that day they fought, till the English had been driven from the eastern tower.

All that week fighting went on ; on the Friday night, Joan said, "I shall be wounded to-morrow."

At sunrise, she mounted her horse and galloped through the town to the river. The troops mounted and gathered about her, and in the early morning they began to attack the great walls of the tower that guarded the river-bank. "Well the English fought ; they drove the French back many times, and tumbled them from high to low ; they fought with bow-shot and gunshot, with axes and with bills." Joan dashed hither and thither among her soldiers, she seemed to them like a ray of light ; she shouted commands, she cried out words of hope and cheer ; but she struck no blows herself. At noon-day, her banner floated close to the wall of the tower ; she placed her foot on the

ladder to climb it, but an arrow pierced her shoulder. Bravely she drew it out, but she turned faint with the pain, and so rested for a little space. Soon she was again on horseback, and the soldiers shouted with joy as her white banner waved afresh. But "the English shuddered and fear fell upon them." The French soldiers rushed upon the tower with a furious charge; ladders were placed against it; swords and axes flashed forth. The English tried to meet them, but their arrows were exhausted. They hurled stones upon the French, but the French fought with their lances, their maces, and their fists. At last they reached the crest of the tower, and the English turned and fled.

Then the French troops rode back victorious into Orleans, and the bells of the city pealed forth in joy. Multitudes of people pressed around the Maid to kiss her hands, her feet, and the folds of her banner; but she rode silent, as in a dream of thankfulness and joy.

Very soon after this, the English, seeing that the siege was hopeless, marched away from the city of Orleans.

But though Orleans was saved, there was still much fighting to be done. For three months, Joan and her troops went on fighting against the English; then, in July, King Charles was crowned

King at Rheims. Great crowds of people filled the great Cathedral, but the Maid was near the King with her banner in her hand. When he turned from the altar, Joan fell at his feet and clasped his knees: "Gentle King," she cried through tears of joy, "now is the pleasure of God fulfilled; you are consecrated true King of France."

Yet Joan knew that her work was not done; the English were not yet quite driven out; she saw also that King Charles was a pleasure-loving man, and that unless she urged him on to fight, he would not win his whole kingdom back. Her task was now more difficult than at first; for many nobles and generals were jealous of her fame, and the King himself did little to help her. So she fought on and on, leading those troops that trusted her; but her soul was now troubled sorely, for her voices began to warn her of danger and suffering.

One evening, in May, 1430, the French, led by Joan, were trying to drive the English back from a small town. They had got beyond the gates, and were chasing the flying foe, when suddenly the English turned upon them so fiercely that the French fled back towards the city. Joan felt herself borne backward against her will. Nearer and nearer pressed the English; she heard their shouts and the brutal names they called her. Then

there was a blow on her shoulder, and her horse fell heavily with her. She felt herself raised by a strong rough arm ; cruel, insolent faces were about her, and words she could not understand. Then a great shout of triumph rose from the English ; Joan was in the hands of her enemies. She was taken as a prisoner to the castle of Rouen.

* * * * *

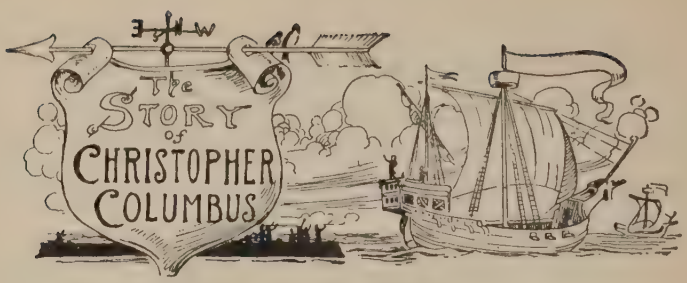
The French did not try to save her ; they joined with the English in bringing her to trial. She was cruelly treated ; she was kept a close prisoner, with brutal soldiers watching her day and night. Day after day, for months, she was brought before judges who tried to "entangle her in her talk." They wanted to prove that she had done her work by the help of evil spirits, and that her voices had deceived her. Indeed, in her last confession, when her mind was worn out with her sufferings, she did say this : "My voices have deceived me." At last, though they could prove no evil against her, they wickedly condemned her to death.

On the last day of May, 1431, she was brought forth to death. A great pile of wood was set up in the Market Place of Rouen, and there they bound her to a stake. A priest held up a crucifix that she might gaze on the image of the suffering Christ.

The flames began to rise ; they lit up the surging,

staring crowd of Frenchmen and Englishmen ; they crept to the feet of the figure in its long, white robe, standing high up beneath the blue sky. Suddenly, there came a great cry out of the smoke and flames : " My voices were of God ; they have not deceived me."

And from the midst of the crowd a soldier muttered : " We have burned a saint."



About twenty years after the death of Joan of Arc, there was living a boy called Christopher Columbus. His home was in the beautiful city of Genoa, by the deep blue Mediterranean Sea. The streets of the city rose steeply from the edge of the water; behind it, high mountains stood out against the blue sky. Christopher loved playing among the boats that lay in the harbour. He used to climb from one to the other, or to row out to a ship which had come home from foreign lands. He talked to the sailors and asked about their adventures, because he said to himself, "I will go to sea some day." When he was tired of climbing, and rowing, and talking, he would sit on the sea wall, with his bare feet dangling in the warm sea water, and draw rough maps with charcoal or pieces of stone. At night, he dreamt about strange lands and peoples. In the mornings, he was at school; he learned to read, and write, and add up figures. Also he learned to draw, and to watch the stars, and he

loved the stars very much, because he knew they would help him some day to find his way upon the sea. When he was fourteen, his great wish was fulfilled ; his father said he might be a sailor.

So one day, he said good-bye to all those at home, and rowed out over the still waters of the harbour ; he climbed up into one of the ships that lay there with her sails unfurled, and helped the sailors to get ready for the voyage. As they sailed away, Christopher looked back at his home ; his friends upon the quay, the houses, the streets, and the distant hills, he could first see quite clearly ; but they got smaller and smaller, till he could see them no more. Then he turned his face towards the sunset.

In those days, sailors did not go for such long voyages as people take now. That was because their ships were too small to carry much provision and also they had no maps or charts.

To the west of Europe, where the sun sets, stretches a great ocean ; for thousands of miles there is nothing to be seen but the sea with its great waves. In those days, many sailors thought that the world was flat, and that if a ship sailed too far over that great ocean, it would come to the edge of the world, and tumble into empty space.

Now, though they dared not travel far to

westward over the ocean, many daring travellers had journeyed eastward over the land. They had travelled over Asia to India, as Alexander had done long, long ago. Across these sandy deserts, merchants from India brought pepper, and cinnamon, and silk, and gold embroideries, and other rare things to sell to the merchants of Italy. But the journey over the sandy desert was slow, and few things could be carried on the camels' backs. Christopher Columbus had often seen the Indian spices and fabrics sold in his native town.

About the time when Christopher Columbus was growing up, men were still afraid of that great western ocean which seemed as though it stretched to the edge of the world. But there were men who had begun to whisper that perhaps, after all, the world was not flat, but round, and that if you went boldly on and on to the westward, you would sail round the world and reach the great Indian land which had already been reached to the eastward. If ships could do this, they could carry back to Europe whole ship-loads of spices and other goods to sell.

* * * * *

Many years passed in the life of Christopher Columbus, during which he travelled by sea to many countries of Europe, and learned all about sailing a ship. He heard men talk of the western

ocean, and he read books about the shape of the world. Then, very slowly, there came into his mind the certainty that if he went westwards across the great ocean he would reach India, and that if he travelled still on and on he would get back to Europe. "The world is round," he said to himself. "We can get to India by going westward. I will prove it some day." But to prove it, he knew he must have money to get ships and men, and Columbus was quite a poor man. So he went on working, and waiting, and hoping.

When he was about forty years old, a great King and Queen were reigning in Spain; they were called Ferdinand and Isabella. They were very religious, and thought it was part of their duty to try to make every one believe what they believed themselves. They thought that if new lands were discovered, the natives would be taught Christianity, and so they believed it was right to discover new lands.

Columbus heard of this, and he determined to tell the Queen his plans, and ask her help. She treated him kindly, but it was only after seven years that she sent him enough money for his work.

Then he got ready three small vessels; the largest was not so big as a modern pleasure-steamer on the Thames. He had difficulty in getting sailors to go

with him, as men were afraid of trying such a long voyage ; at last the only ones he could get were men who had done bad deeds, and wanted to escape from punishment. He had about 120 men altogether, in three ships.

On Friday, August 3rd, 1492, the three little white-sailed ships lay ready in the harbour of a small Spanish port. All the sailors went to service in the church and confessed their sins to a priest ; then they went on board, and began to stow away food and drink. Towards evening, they drew up the anchors and turned their bows to the west. Now and again they looked back, and saw the crowds upon the quay and the little town on the hill-side getting smaller and smaller to their view ; at last, even the land of Spain was but a line on the horizon. Then they said to each other, " We shall come back when we have found India."

As they sailed westwards, every day was full of hopes and fears. Sometimes, they saw strange birds, and said to each other : " These never come to Europe ; we cannot be far from a strange shore." Sometimes, they came upon great plains of seaweed, and said, " Surely, that cannot live in mid-ocean." One day a drizzling rain came on, and then they said, " This is a land-mist ; soon we shall see land." But when, in spite of these

111 Columbus called to two of his officers and asked them to look ahead (*page* 59)

things, no land appeared, the sailors began to "murmur between their teeth." They begged Columbus to change his course, and either to look for land to the northward, or southward, or to return home. When he refused, they got angry; they talked darkly together in whispers, and said: "Let us throw the Admiral into the sea; we can say, he fell in by accident; men will believe it, for he is always star-gazing." And often, when Columbus went among them, he saw their wild eyes looking cruelly at him; but, then, he used to talk to them so gently and yet so boldly, that they felt fear and love for him both at once, and forgot their cruel plans.

But in reality, Columbus was very sore and fearful at heart; he told no one of his wavering hopes; he only prayed earnestly that he might keep his courage and his faith in God. And it was agreed between the commanders of the three ships that whichever of them first sighted land should fire a gun to let the others know.

It was October the 11th; the sun had set, and darkness had fallen. Columbus was standing at the bow of his vessel looking westwards at that dreary waste of waters, as he had looked for these two long months. Suddenly, his heart seemed to stand still; for right ahead of him he saw what

seemed to be a small, moving light. He called quietly to two of his officers, and asked them to look ahead.

"I see a light," said one. "A light? nay—there is nought," said the other. "Where should a light come from?" Now, this man had scoffed from the first at Columbus' plans. But presently he said: "There does seem to be a small flame ahead of us, as it were, a candle-flame; it seems to move up and down." Then for a space they could see no more.

Suddenly, from one of the other ships, a gun was fired; and now, when Columbus looked, he saw, even through the night, a dark mass ahead such as they had never seen before.

When the dawn came, they saw, quite close, a thickly-wooded land. The ships cast anchor; the Admiral dressed himself in shining armour, with a crimson scarf flowing over it. In a boat with several of his officers, he rowed towards the shore; the crew followed, carrying banners and weapons. When Columbus stepped on the new land, he fell on his knees and kissed the earth; he wept for joy and gave thanks to God. Then his men gathered about him and fell at his feet; some begged forgiveness for their evil doings; some almost worshipped him.

The banner of Spain was set up on the shore.

After a time the Spaniards saw a crowd of dark-skinned islanders, with black hair and eyes, who gazed in astonishment at men unlike any they had ever seen before.

* * * * *

Now, Columbus believed that he had come upon islands near to India; so he called them the "West Indies." But in reality he had discovered a great new land bigger than Europe—the land of America.

And from that time onwards, men were no longer afraid to sail westwards over the great ocean, and they began to explore and to settle in the new land. Columbus himself also made many other voyages, and his sailors were no longer afraid that he would guide them astray.

ARCHBISHOP CRANMER

When you were very little, and had not yet learnt to read, you were taught many things by pictures. Now, in very old days, when the Saxons and the Normans lived in England, most of the people were like little children. They could not read, and they had very simple thoughts. The priests, as clergymen were called in those days, knew that the people were too simple even to understand the words of prayers, so they used to pray in Latin, which is a very beautiful solemn-sounding language. They thought that the beautiful and solemn sound would give those who heard it beautiful and solemn thoughts. The people had no books, but men painted on the walls of the churches pictures of Bible stories, and of stories of the lives of good and holy men, so that these simple folk could understand the things which they were too ignorant to read about, just as you used to learn from pictures in the schoolroom.

When many hundred years had passed, there came a time when there were more books, and

more schools in England, and many more people could read. Some men began to think that it would be much better to have the services in church in English instead of in Latin, so that everybody could understand the words instead of only hearing the sound of them. They thought, too, that it would be better to cover up the beautiful pictures on the church walls with whitewash, lest people should gaze at them, not listen to the service. Other men thought that this was wrong, and that the old Latin services made folk feel more solemn and still than English prayers, which everybody could say for themselves, could ever do. The King, Edward VI., was only a boy, but he believed that the Latin services and the pictures were not needed any more. He and his Parliament said that in future the prayers in church were to be in English. But as yet there was no English prayer-book, so Edward asked the Archbishop of Canterbury, whose name was Thomas Cranmer, to make one.

Cranmer was very glad. Long before Edward was born he had begun to wish that the people could understand the words of the services. Yet he wanted the English prayers to sound as solemn and stately as the old Latin ones had done. Day after day for many months he sat in his quiet study, with great leather-covered books around him,

DAY AFTER DAY HE SAT IN HIS QUIET STUDY, WITH GREAT LEATHER-COVERED BOOKS AROUND HIM.

choosing the best prayers he could find from old Latin books. Then he translated them out of the Latin into English, and he chose the most beautiful English words to write them in, so that these English prayers sound like solemn music. Except during a few years, this Prayer-book has been used in English churches ever since. Is it not wonderful to think that the very same prayers have been said almost every day in England for nearly five hundred years ?

Not very many years passed before King Edward died, and his sister Mary became Queen. Ever since she was quite young, people had been unkind to Mary, but the sadder her heart was the more she loved to go to church, and to do the things that she thought were pleasing to God. She loved to see the churches bright with pictures and ablaze with candles, and to hear the priest, in his rich robes, chant the old Latin service. It seemed to her that God was angry because all the beautiful pictures had been taken out of the churches, and the people said their prayers in English. Perhaps it was because men had been harsh and cruel to her that Mary believed that God would be pleased by the death of those who had made these changes. She determined to bring back all the old things, and to burn alive any one who still believed that the simple churches, and the English services, were right.

This was very terrible for Cranmer, because he had helped more than any one to make the changes. His friends asked him to go away from England, to a country where Mary could not reach him, but he would not. He was Archbishop of Canterbury—that is, the chief clergyman in England. He could not run away and leave the people he had taught to believe as he did. So by and by men came and took him away from the beautiful palace where he lived. They shut him up in a prison in Oxford, with two other bishops who were his friends. At last one day, after they had been in prison more than a year and a half, the other two bishops were taken away, to be burned alive. It was autumn, and as Cranmer walked on the flat roof of his prison, he looked over the chimneys of the houses, and beyond the walls of the city. In a great ditch, outside the gates, he could see a crowd of people, and two piles of wood and furze which towered above their heads. By and by he saw flames leap into the sky. He knew that his two friends had been fastened to the piles of wood and were being burnt alive.

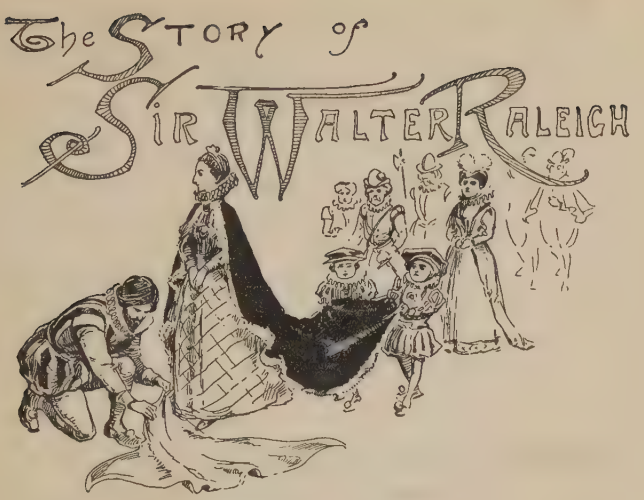
Cranmer became very sad. It was terrible to know that his friends were dead. It was terrible to know, that unless he could say that he no longer believed in the English Prayer-book, he must die the same awful death he had seen them die. Now, all the things he cared for most were taken from

him. He was not allowed to have books, or pen and ink, or to see his friends. All day he sat in his gloomy prison with nothing to do. Then one day he was made to dress in all the costly robes he wore as Archbishop, and was taken to a church. There, before a great crowd of people, he was stripped of his robes, and all the hair was shaved off his head, to show that he was no longer an archbishop, no longer even the humblest of clergymen. He was sent back through the streets to prison, with shaven head, and dressed in a threadbare peasant's tunic.

Suppose two children left alone in the dark. One of them is not afraid, the other is horribly afraid but does not cry. The one who is afraid but does not cry is really braver than the one who is not afraid. Cranmer was like the child who is afraid. The thought of being burnt alive frightened him far more than it had frightened the other two bishops. To be lonely and sad frightened him dreadfully too. For weeks he had borne his fear and sadness without crying out. At last his courage failed. Men came and asked him to write a letter to say that he no longer believed as he had done when King Edward was alive. He wrote this letter as he was asked, because he feared that if he did not write it he would be burned alive.

All this time Queen Mary had been growing sadder and more cruel. It seemed to her now that she had not done enough to please God by making Cranmer write the letter to say he had done wrong. She thought she would please Him still further if she burnt him as she had burnt the other bishops. So men came to the prison and told him that he must die; but before he died, he must tell the crowds who came to watch, that he no longer believed that the English Prayer-book was pleasing to God.

The next day Cranmer was led out to be burned. Hundreds of people had come to hear him say that all the things he once believed were wrong. They thought he was a coward. Now, as they listened breathlessly, they suddenly heard him declare that he had done wrong to write the letter. He still thought as he had always done. He was proud to die a fearful death for the things he believed to be true. Angry cries broke out on all sides, but Cranmer's face shone with courage and calm. He was dragged away to the great pile of wood. As the flames sprang up round him, he held out the hand which had written the letter, and let it burn before his face.



In the days of Queen Mary, there lived in Devonshire a little boy called Walter Raleigh. His father had a farm near the sea-coast. The house was of one storey, with a thatched roof and a large porch over the front door. Walter had a happy life running about the fields and woods; he liked to talk to the shepherds as they sheared their sheep in the spring, and to the reapers in the corn at harvest-time. But he loved best to run down through the oak woods to the sandy shore, to wade in the blue water, or sail far out with his big half-brothers, Humphrey and Adrian Gilbert.

Sometimes his father took him to the town of Exmouth, not many miles away, and there he met

sailors from foreign lands. They told him tales of their adventures; of storms and calms on the great ocean; of burning sunshine and of deep, damp forests; of wondrous beasts and birds; of gold and pearls and precious stones. And Walter made up his mind to be a sailor himself one day.

He grew up a tall, strong man, with rosy cheeks and curly hair and blue-grey eyes. Then, as his father was not rich, he went to London to seek his fortune.

By this time, Queen Elizabeth was reigning, and her Court was very gay. Every young Englishman who wanted to do great deeds tried to get to Court, because the Queen loved men who were brave and witty and handsome. All over England, men talked of the great Queen, of how they loved her, and how good she was to those whom she loved.

So every day Raleigh went to Greenwich Palace, where the Queen generally lived, and stood among the brightly dressed crowd near the palace door. One day he stood close to the path which led to the river, where her barge stood waiting. It had been raining, and there was a muddy place in the path. The palace door opened at last, and the Queen came forth. Raleigh watched her stately walk, her splendid dress and her high-heeled delicate shoes; he saw her pause and frown as she neared

the muddy place. Then, quickly, he drew off his new mantle of orange plush, and laid it on the ground before Her Grace. Gently the Queen trod upon it; her bright brown eyes looked keenly at Raleigh as he bent beside her. When she reached the barge, she turned to her nobles and said, "Fetch hither that gallant to speak with me; and send him three fine suits of clothing for this courtesy of his."

After that, Raleigh became one of the Queen's greatest favourites. He lived much at the Court; he rode with Elizabeth when she hunted in the woods on Shooter's Hill, he talked with her about State secrets, and sat with her in her private room to play games in the evenings. She gave him much money and many lands, so that he became rich, and after two years she knighted him, so that he was called "Sir Walter Raleigh."

In those days the great new land, America, that Columbus had discovered, was in all men's thoughts. But Spaniards settled there more than Englishmen, and the Spaniards were carrying off gold and pearls, and becoming rich; also, the Spaniards were cruel to the natives, the poor dark-skinned Indians, to whom the land belonged. Raleigh's desire was that Englishmen should get some of that country, and should gain its wealth by

being kind and not cruel to the natives. So he began to spend his money in sending out ships and men to North America, where no Spaniards had yet gone. These brought back stories of the gold and precious stones they had seen, and of pearls as large as peas ; also, they brought useful plants—potatoes and the tobacco plant, which were both new to Englishmen. Raleigh now sent out fresh ships, full of men and women who said that they were ready to live in North America and make it an English colony. But because they found no gold or silver there, and were in danger from fierce Red Indians, many of them sailed home again ; the rest were never heard of again, and probably the Indians killed them. So Raleigh failed to make an English land in North America.

In 1595, Raleigh determined to go himself to find a land of gold in South America. So he fitted out ships and sailed westwards. When they reached the land, they found a great river-mouth, and they rowed up it in small boats. The hot sun blazed upon them, the marshes on the river-bank gave out noxious vapours ; sometimes the natives, hidden in the thick bushes, shot poisoned arrows at them ; they were sick and weary, but they still went on. At length they came to a fairer region, where deer wandered in grassy glades, and birds of bright colours flew from tree to tree.

Here a native chief was friendly ; he brought them fish and fowls and pine-apples to eat. Then they set forth again, seeking the gold mine further inland. But autumn had come ; rain fell in torrents, storms of thunder and lightning burst upon them. The sailors were soaked with wet ; food and water were bad ; they fell ill of fever, and many died. At last, Raleigh saw that he must turn back. Sad at heart, he ordered his men to row down the river and make for home. They had to pass all that weary way again, knowing they had failed. The same difficulties met them as they rowed back ; but in all their troubles Raleigh never allowed his men to injure a native, man or woman or child.

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When Queen Elizabeth died, a Scotchman became King of England, as James I. James did not know Raleigh, and some of Raleigh's enemies, who were jealous of him, now spread evil tales about him. At last he was accused, quite falsely, of helping in a plot against James. He was tried and sent as a prisoner to the Tower of London. Here he remained for thirteen long years. At first, he was terribly unhappy, feeling like a caged lion. He longed for excitement and work, for his ships and sailors, and the wide, wide sea. He felt that he had failed in all he longed to do for England.

After a time, he began to get pleasure out of books, and to write one himself on "The History of the World." He was allowed to walk in a small garden, and to see his wife and children. But in all those

RALEIGH IMPRISONED IN THE TOWER.

thirteen years he never forgot his plan for finding the gold mine in South America.

One day he was thinking about this, when it suddenly came into his mind that King James might set him free if he could be sure of finding the gold. He felt so excited that he began to walk up and

down his little room; his eyes grew bright; he talked to himself. "If I were to write to the King and tell him that I know I could find it—that he should have all the gold; thousands and thousands of pounds of gold; would he not let me go? He must; he would. I *will* write; I *will* go. I will succeed after all." Then he stopped, and looked forth from his little window at the clear flowing Thames, and suddenly his brow grew dark. "But if I should fail; if I still cannot find the gold; if I come back empty handed—why *then*, *then*—I shall pay for it with my life. Better so. I will risk all, and if I fail, I die."

He wrote to the King, and the King let him go, but he had to promise two things; to bring back much gold, and not to fight against the Spaniards.

Raleigh was an old man and often suffering, but he was now as eager as a boy. In March, 1617, his fleet set sail; his son, Walter, went with him, but most of the crew were wild and lawless men. They sailed westwards and reached South America, but Raleigh himself was too ill to land. He sent a party of men, under a captain, to find the gold mine; his son was one of the party. For six long weeks Raleigh waited on board his ship for news. One night a messenger brought him a letter. Raleigh opened it with trembling hands; then the

letter fell to the ground, and he bowed his head on his arms. All his hopes were wrecked; he read how the band of Englishmen had come upon a Spanish town on their journey, and had fought against the Spaniards; how, in the fight, young Walter had been killed; how the whole party were in flight; no gold had been found.

* * * * *

In June of that year, Raleigh reached England. He might have fled to France, but he chose bravely to face his failure.

He was brought to trial and condemned to death.

On October 29th he went forth to the scaffold in Old Palace Yard, Westminster; he was cheerful, even merry.

"I thank God," he said, "that I die in the light. I have a long journey to take, and I must bid the company farewell." Then he fingered the sharp axe, and smiled. "It is a sure cure for all diseases," he said.

He prayed silently for a few moments,—laid his head upon the block,—and then, the axe fell.

All men felt that England had lost a brave and loyal gentleman, who had loved his country and worked for her, above all else.

In olden days, the King and the Parliament used to make laws about the religion which Englishmen must follow; if any one did not obey the laws they were punished. Thus, in the reign of Queen Mary, Archbishop Cranmer and other men suffered death because they would not become Roman Catholics. But in the time of Queen Elizabeth and King James I., men were forbidden by law to be Roman Catholics. If they attended their own services, or refused to attend those of the Church of England, they had to pay large sums of money; if they could not pay, they were imprisoned. Their priests were ordered to leave England; those who would not go hid in the houses of their rich friends; if

they were caught, they were put to death, and those who helped them were imprisoned.

Yet not all the Roman Catholics were bitter and angry because of these laws; some saw they were best for the State. There was a small number of them, however, who were so bitter that they determined to be revenged upon the Government.

One day, in the spring of 1604, five Roman Catholic gentlemen met together in a house between the city of London and Westminster. It was a lonely house with green fields round it. Clement's Inn stands there now. These men talked seriously about the sufferings of their friends; sometimes they whispered to each other. At length there entered a priest, in a long black robe. Then each man in turn knelt down and laid his hands on a holy book held by the priest, saying, "I swear by the Blessed Trinity never to tell any one else this secret, nor to leave off working at this plot till all the rest give me leave." Now, the plot they had made was this: to put barrels of gunpowder beneath the Parliament House, and to set fire to them when the King and the Lords and Commons would be there, at the opening of Parliament, so that all would be killed.

Before they could begin, they needed money. So they went separately into different parts of

England, and persuaded some rich Roman Catholic gentlemen to join them. At last, about thirteen persons knew about the plot.

In the spring of 1605, seven of the plotters returned to London. One of them was a Yorkshire gentleman who had fought in the Spanish army; he was very brave, and loyal to his friends. His name was Guy Fawkes. He agreed to dress like a servant, to call himself "John Johnson," and to do the most dangerous part of the work.

Then the plotters began their business. In those days there were several private houses and several inns built close up to the Houses of Parliament. One of these houses had behind it a garden, in which was a building which rested against the very wall of the House of Lords, which was then called the Parliament House, where the King would open Parliament. This house with its garden they hired. Then they began to dig through the floor of the building in the garden, so as to make an underground passage under the wall of the Parliament House into the vault beneath it. They dug in the day-time, and at night they buried in the garden the stones and rubbish. Fawkes kept watch from the windows of the house, lest any one should come and find out what they were doing. They had brought with them wine and pasties and

hard-boiled eggs to last for three weeks, so that they need not go out for food.

The work was hard and disheartening, since they were not used to this sort of labour ; and when they dug deep, water rose in the passage they had made, because the ground was so near the river that it was damp and marshy.

One day, as they worked, they heard a loud rumbling noise close to them ; they stopped work and sent Fawkes to find out what it was. After a time he came back looking excited and glad. " Friends," he said, " the vault we are trying to get at is used as a coal-cellar, and the coal-merchant, Bright, is selling his coals to-day, and leaving. Let us hire the vault, and save ourselves the trouble of digging."

So they went and hired the vault, and bought all the remaining coals.

Next, they hired a house at Lambeth across the river, opposite to the Parliament House. Here they collected gunpowder in small quantities, till they had twenty barrels full. Then, night after night, when there was no moon, they rowed across the river with a barrel of gunpowder, and placed it in the vault. Then they covered up the barrels with a thousand logs of wood and quantities of faggots and coals.

Now, everything seemed ready. Fawkes was to be alone in the vault on November 5th, the day on which Parliament was to meet; he was to put a slow-burning match to the gunpowder, and escape before the explosion took place. Then he would take boat down the river to Flanders.

The other plotters were to seize those members of the Royal Family who were not blown up in the explosion.

But there was one great difficulty. At the meeting of Parliament, Roman Catholic lords, and perhaps their wives, would be present; many of these were friends of the plotters. How were they to be warned to avoid the danger? This was discussed, but Catesby, the leader, would not consent to give any one warning.

Ten days before Parliament was to meet, Lord Mounteagle, a Catholic lord, was at supper, when a page brought him a letter. In it he read these words: "My lord, I advise you, as you tender your life, to avoid attending this Parliament. They shall receive a terrible blow this Parliament, yet they shall not see who hurts them."

Now, Lord Mounteagle guessed that his friends had made some fearful plot, and he knew that no good could come of such work. So he rode at once to Whitehall, and told the Ministers of State. The

King was not in town; so they decided to do nothing till his return. When King James saw Lord Mounteagle's letter, he also was frightened, and told the Lord Chamberlain to go round the buildings under the Parliament House, and to pretend he was looking for some tapestries, which had been stowed away and mislaid. When the Lord Chamberlain, in this search, knocked at the door of the vault, Fawkes opened it; and when he saw the piles of coal and faggots, he asked to whom they belonged. Fawkes replied, "To Mr. Thomas Percy." Now, the Lord Chamberlain knew that Percy was a Catholic, so he believed that something serious was going on. But he said nothing just then, for fear of frightening the plotters, and what the King wanted was to catch them in the midst of their work. On hearing the Lord Chamberlain's story, the King ordered a second search to be made late that night. But all the plotters heard that they were being suspected, so they hid themselves in lonely houses in London, ready for flight. Only Fawkes remained calm. That evening, Monday, the 4th of November, he went as usual to Westminster to make the last preparations.

At eleven o'clock at night he had finished, and he stepped outside the door of the vault. There, face to face with him, was a party of men armed with swords and pistols. Their leader said, "We

must search this cellar, sir, in the King's name." Then Fawkes knew that the plot was discovered. He had to open the door again and show the place where the wood pile stood ; they pulled it down and found the gunpowder and his lantern ; they

"WE MUST SEARCH THIS CELLAR, SIR, IN THE KING'S NAME."

searched Fawkes' clothes and found his watch, his slow matches, and his dry tinder wood. Then they bound him hand and foot, and carried him to Whitehall, into the presence of the King. His questioners were hurried and violent ; Fawkes

answered coolly and firmly. Then he was taken to the Tower of London ; the next day he was tortured to force him to name his fellow-plotters. This he would not do, till he had become so weak with pain that he lost his self-control.

Meanwhile, the other plotters had fled from London ; some died fighting with their pursuers ; some were brought back to be tried.

On January 31st, they were all put to death at Westminster. Guy Fawkes was the last to suffer ; he was weak from illness and torture. His last words were, " I ask pardon of the King."

But this plot has never been forgotten or forgiven by the English people ; they still explode gunpowder on November 5th, and make a jest of the name of Guy Fawkes ; they forget that he was a brave man who believed in the cause for which he died.

MONTROSE

In this story you will hear more about that beautiful country of Scotland for whose freedom Robert Bruce fought.

There are mountains in Scotland, rising purple against the sky, and dark forests clothe the lower hills; broad lakes lie in the valleys; and there are wide stretches of open country, called moors. In August and September mountains and moors are covered with little purple flowers of the heather.

The people of the mountainous parts of Scotland are the Highlanders; in the old days the men used to dress in a long strip of woollen cloth called a plaid; part of this they fastened round their waists to make a short skirt or tunic; the other part they wound round their shoulders. These plaids were of bright colours arranged in checkered patterns; every large family, or "clan," of Highlanders had a different check on its plaid to distinguish the members of that clan from others.

Now, in the reign of King James I. there was

growing up in Scotland a young man called James Graham. His father was a nobleman, the Earl of Montrose, who lived in a large house built of grey stone; woods and hills lay round it, and purple mountains rose far away against the sky.

James Graham and his three sisters used to play together in the wide garden, and to gallop on horseback over the heathery moors. James also loved shooting with bow and arrows, and he cared much for books.

When he was fifteen years old, his father died, and he was therefore called "Earl of Montrose." He was now the master of much land, and of three great castles; he married when he was only seventeen, as young men often did in those days; before he was twenty-one, he had four little sons. We may picture him at this time as a tall, well-made man, with reddish-brown hair and grey eyes, a straight nose, and a strong sweet mouth. He already looked on life as a serious thing, not meant for pleasure but for work.

King Charles I. was now reigning in England, and he was King of Scotland too. Charles was a good man in some ways, but he was not a wise ruler. He wanted all his subjects to think alike about religion. He tried to force the Scots to use the English Prayer-book and the English service in

their churches. The first time that this service was used in St. Giles' Church at Edinburgh, a great tumult and noise arose, so that the minister could not go on reading; when he tried to do so an old woman called Jeannie Geddes threw a stool at his head.

Then the Scots sent letters to King Charles begging him to let them use their own service, but the King would not agree.

At length, some leaders of the Scots came together and wrote out an agreement which they called a "Covenant." In this agreement they said that they would resist all that the King might do to force them to alter their way of worshipping God.

One February afternoon, in 1638, a great crowd of people were streaming into the old church of Grey Friars at Edinburgh. Soon, the building was packed, and hundreds stood in the snowy churchyard. Then, by the light of torches, a great parchment scroll was opened and read aloud to the multitude within the church; and one by one the men and women came forward to write their names below the "Covenant." Amongst these, was Montrose. When all within had signed it, it was carried without, and again read aloud to the patient, shivering crowds. Then it was laid flat on a tombstone, and one by one they knelt to sign it.

Some sobbed and wept in their depth of feeling; some drew blood from their arms, and wrote their names in blood.

After this, copies of the Covenant were carried about Scotland by stern-faced horsemen. They stopped at little villages, and lonely farms, and way-side hovels for men and women to sign. But if any refused, they were cruelly treated, and therefore people began to sign through fear. And those who signed were called the "Covenanters."

After this, war broke out between King Charles and the Covenanters; Montrose led an army against the King. He thought it foolish and wrong of the King to try to make every one think alike; so Montrose fought for the Covenanters, and was one of their best captains.

After a time, however, Montrose began to see that his own party were not wholly in the right; he also saw that the King had a great deal of right on his side. So Montrose began to write secret letters to the King, hoping to make him understand what the Covenanters wanted, and so to make peace between the two parties.

Now this made the leaders of the Covenanters very angry, because they hated King Charles, and could not see why Montrose should want to make peace, unless he was false to his own party. So

they took Montrose and two or three of his friends, and put them in prison in Edinburgh Castle.

There, from the tiny window of his dreary little room, Montrose looked forth on the steep narrow streets of the city, or on the stars of the night sky, and wondered, and wondered which side was really most right—the Covenanters or King Charles.

However, the King now began to think that if he could talk face to face with the leaders of the Covenanters, perhaps he and they would understand each other better. So he travelled to Scotland, and went to stay in the old grey-walled palace of Holyrood. He and the leaders talked together, and they asked him what Montrose had said in those secret letters of his. But the King would not tell them, and he asked to see Montrose alone. This they would not allow ; but they said Montrose and the King could meet in their presence.

On a bright October morning, Montrose was told he must appear before the nobles at the palace of Holyrood. After his dull prison life, he enjoyed being driven there in a coach. He was led into a high oak-panelled room, where sat about twenty Scots noblemen, his enemies. Amongst them, he saw a tall and noble figure with a long, melancholy face. Montrose knew it was the King ; his face flushed with surprise and pleasure ; he went forward

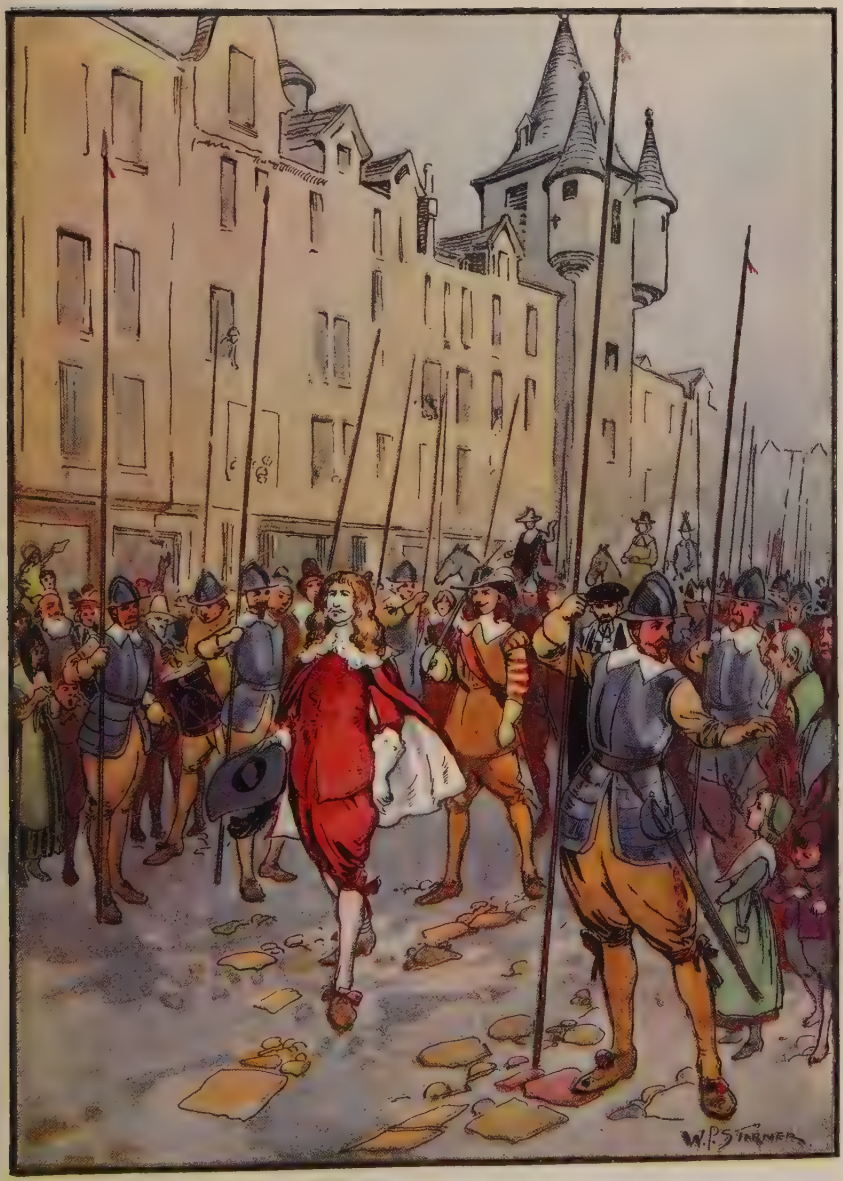
and knelt to kiss the King's hand. Up to this time, he had been wavering ; he had been uncertain whether to cling to the Covenanters or not. But as he rose from kneeling his eyes met the dark, sad ones of King Charles. In that look, the two men understood each other ; from that moment, Montrose vowed inwardly that he would serve the King.

After this, Montrose was set free, because his enemies could not prove that he had done wrong. The next month the King left Scotland ; he had failed to make friends with the Covenanters.

Now, in England as well as in Scotland, there was one party for the King, and one party against him ; those who were for the King were called Royalists, and to these Montrose now belonged. So civil war broke out, and Montrose said Good-bye to his wife and his little sons, and rode away from his beautiful Scotch home. He rode disguised, and with only a single friend, to King Charles' Court at Oxford.

When he was led before the King, he knelt before him and said, " Sire, I will serve you only ; tell me what I can do."

Now, the plan they made was for Montrose to raise an army of Highlanders in Scotland, and try to conquer the Covenanters. This Montrose did and fought so splendidly that at the end of two



III Montrose was brought forth to die (*page* 93)

years he seemed to have won nearly all Scotland for King Charles ; but at last Montrose himself met the Covenanters in a great battle and was defeated. He was uncertain what to do, but he received a message from Charles, bidding him go abroad and wait for happier times.

Then the King's enemies grew stronger and stronger, and the King's party weaker and weaker. At last, the King was taken prisoner ; his enemies said he had been a traitor to his country ; he was condemned to death, and in January, 1649, he was beheaded in front of his own palace of Whitehall.

Montrose was at that time in Holland, at the Court of the Princess Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia, who was sister to King Charles I. ; she was a good and beautiful woman, who understood Montrose and what he was working for.

One day a messenger arrived from England with a letter for Princess Elizabeth : it told of the terrible death of King Charles I. She sent for Montrose that he might share her sorrow with her ; she handed him the letter, and as he read, he fell fainting to the ground. When he came to himself, he said, " I swear before God and man to spend the rest of my life in avenging the death of the royal martyr."

Now, the son of Charles I. was looked upon as

King by the Royalists, and called Charles II. Montrose longed to fight for him, and Charles said he might try. But in Scotland Montrose had very bitter enemies, and they told Charles II. that they would only help him to his throne if he would promise to give up Montrose to them.

It was Saturday, April 27th, 1650. Montrose had reached northern Scotland with a small army of foot soldiers. As they marched southward, they suddenly saw a large army on horseback coming towards them, and Montrose knew that they were his enemies. He drew up his men along the bank of a river, with marshy ground on their right. With a great shout, the horsemen galloped towards them; there was no standing before the charge. Hundreds were cut down; others fled or were captured. Montrose himself galloped away at last, but soon he came to hills so steep that he had to leave his horse and walk. He travelled on alone, hiding by day, walking by night; only twice he got food. On the third day he met a party of men, who looked hard at him, as if they knew who he was. Then they began to talk to him, and at last said, "We are going your way; let us travel together." Montrose dared not refuse, nor try to leave their company, and he presently saw that they were guiding him in a new direction. Then he felt sure he was being betrayed to his

enemies. As the dusk gathered, they came upon an old grey castle, and Montrose at once knew that it belonged to a family who hated him. As the great oaken door closed behind him, he saw that all chance of escape for him was over.

* * * * *

Three weeks later he was brought into Edinburgh, bareheaded and bound, seated in the hangman's cart. Great crowds thronged to see him, and some men reviled and insulted him; but the pale, noble face shamed them into silence, and many wept as they watched him.

After three days he was brought forth to die at the market cross. His tall figure was now clothed gorgeously in crimson; his long hair flowed freely; his handsome face was calm and smiling. "Thousands thronged to see him, as he stepped along the street with so great state that his beauty and majesty amazed all beholders." When he reached the scaffold he turned and spoke to the crowd, "I do but follow the light of my conscience. I thank God I go to Heaven with joy, the way He paved for me." And when he reached the topmost step of the terrible ladder, he cried aloud, "God have pity on this afflicted kingdom."

* * * * *

As that noble form swung out into the air, a sob of pity broke from the vast crowd.

THE PLAGUE AND FIRE OF LONDON

For ten whole years after Montrose died, England and Scotland, Wales and Ireland, were ruled by the English Parliament, and by the great Oliver Cromwell, the Lord Protector. The young King, Charles II., for whom Montrose had given his life, lived in France. But when the Lord Protector died, the King came back again, and began to reign in 1660. In those days there lived in London a gentleman named Mr. Pepys. London then was very different from what it is now. It was so small that Mr. Pepys could easily walk into the country from any part of it. On the high ground stood St. Paul's—not the same St. Paul's that we see to-day, but a church more like Westminster Abbey. The streets were narrow, and had no paved side paths; a gutter ran down the middle to hold the rain-water, which lay about in puddles, because there were no drains to carry it quickly away. Some of the houses were built of brick and stone, but many

were still built of wood ; their top storeys hung out further than the lower ones, so that Mr. Pepys, as he walked in the streets, could see very little sky and breathe very little fresh air. Sometimes an upstairs window would be thrown open, and some one would empty dirty water, or such things as we put into dust-bins, into the street. Lest this should happen, Mr. Pepys walked close under the houses, so that no rubbish should fall on him and spoil his fine clothes.

The narrow streets were always full of people, some in coaches, some carried in sedan chairs, others on foot. The clatter of feet and of wheels made a great noise on the stones, so did the cries of shopmen, who used to stand outside their shops all day, calling to passers-by, " What do ye lack ? " Mr. Pepys, and the other people who lived in London in those days, loved the noise and the crowds. They wore very gay clothes, and went often to the theatre, or to see cock-fights or bear-baitings and other cruel sports.

One spring day Mr. Pepys went to a coffee-house, where gentlemen met to talk and drink coffee together. Here he met several friends, but instead of being gay as usual, they looked very solemn. They said that many people living just outside London were ill of the plague. This was a very

terrible illness which used to come to England in old days. If any one were to have the plague now, he would be sent away to a fever hospital. There careful nurses would make him clean and comfortable, and give him good food and medicine, and clever doctors would visit him and perhaps cure him. He would be kept by himself till there was no fear of his making other people ill. Two hundred and fifty years ago there were no special fever hospitals, no trained nurses, and doctors did not know as much as they do now; so Mr. Pepys felt very frightened when he heard that the plague was come. He thought that many people would catch it and suffer horribly, and most likely die. He did not know that the plague came to London because of the narrow, dirty streets, where the rubbish from the houses lay rotting with the rain-water in the puddles.

Other people were also frightened. Most of the rich Londoners went away into the country. For the next few weeks, Mr. Pepys saw the streets full of coaches and waggons and men on horseback. Whole families were escaping from London with their luggage. But many people were too poor, or too busy to go. The weather was terribly hot. Soon thousands were ill or dying. Those that were well still went to see cock-fights and bear-baitings. At last the Lord Mayor said there were to be no

THE CITY STRICKEN BY PLAGUE.

more shows of this kind, because in the crowds people caught the sickness from one another. He ordered that any house where folk had the plague should be shut up; a big red cross was painted on the door with the words, "The Lord have mercy on us." A watchman stood outside to see that no one went in or out. He had to fetch food and medicine and hand it in to the poor people through the windows.

Some doctors ran away, but many stayed and tried to help the sick; yet so many people fell ill that there was no time to tend them properly, and so many died that there was no time to bury them separately. Carts were sent round the streets at night to carry the dead away to big graves, where many people were buried together. Those who were not ill were afraid to stop and talk to any one in the street. If they had to buy anything they would take it from its place in the shop themselves, and would give the exact money for it, lest the shopman should give them the plague by handling the goods or by giving them change. As the weeks passed on, Mr. Pepys noticed how more and more houses had red crosses painted on them. The streets were so empty that grass grew up between the stones. Many shops were shut; all the noise and clatter ceased. There was a dreadful silence, only broken when a church bell tolled to show that some one had died.

This terrible state of things lasted all through the summer, but when the cold winter weather came the plague went away. People began to come back to London. Those who had stayed and were still alive lost their fear, and went about the streets buying and selling and enjoying themselves as before. They soon forgot that if the sickness came again to those narrow dirty streets, people would catch it just as badly as ever. Then a strange thing happened. One Saturday night, after Mr. Pepys had gone to bed, he was wakened by his maid Jane crying at his door that there was a great fire in the city.

A baker's shop near London Bridge was burning. The street was very narrow, the houses were all wooden. A strong wind caught the flames and blew them from house to house, and across the street to the overhanging gables opposite. When Mr. Pepys got up at seven o'clock next morning three hundred houses had already been burnt down. There were no such fire-engines as we have now. People were so frightened that they did not stop to try to put out the flames, but rushed into the street, carrying their furniture with them. Some tried to store it in churches, others stacked it in boats on the river. The fire grew fiercer as it caught houses along the Thames where oil and tar were stored. The flames made a terrible

roaring noise. Pigeons fluttered about till they fell with scorched wings. The ground was so hot that it burnt Mr. Pepys' feet. When night came again the sky looked as though it were on fire.

All Monday the fire raged. On Tuesday King Charles himself came to London, and said that houses on the edge of the city must be blown up with gunpowder. In this way big gaps were made in the streets, so that the flames could not spread further. On Thursday the fire ceased. By this time most of the town was in ashes. Eighty-nine churches had been burnt down. Only a few stones of St. Paul's cathedral were left. Hundreds of people had no homes and had to sleep out in the fields near the city. They had neither food nor clothes. The King and other rich people collected money to help them, and after a few weeks men began to build the city up again.

The new buildings were made of brick or stone and without overhanging storeys. They stood further apart, so that the streets were wider and healthier. A great man called Sir Christopher Wren wanted to make the city really beautiful, but the people would not wait for him to plan better streets or to build fine houses and shops.

They were not in such a hurry to rebuild the churches, so Sir Christopher spent many years

building some of the most beautiful of those which now stand in London. The greatest of these is St. Paul's. When you see its ball and cross above the roofs and chimneys, or stand under the great dome and feel very small and still, you must think of old Sir Christopher, and how he wanted to make London the most beautiful city in Europe. You must think, too, of the wonderful fire which cleansed London city for evermore from the plague, and of Mr. Pepys who wrote a book in which he told us what he saw.

King George II. of England was the great-great-grandson of King James I., through James' eldest daughter, Princess Elizabeth, who had married a German Prince. Before George II. had begun to reign, England and Scotland had been made one kingdom by Act of Parliament, and it seemed as though the old Stuart family of Kings would soon be forgotten.

But there were a great number of people in Scotland, and some also in England, who loved the Stuart family, and wanted to have a Stuart King instead of George II. These people called themselves Jacobites, because Jacobus is the Latin name for James, and James II. was the last of the Stuart Kings to reign in England. He had been driven away because he ruled so badly, but he had a son

called James Edward; and soon after George II. became King of England, this James Edward married, and settled down in an old palace in Rome.

Presently there was born to him a little son, who was christened Charles Edward. He grew into a sturdy, noisy little boy; he loved running about and jumping on the bare floors of the palace where he lived. In the first letter he wrote to his father, he said, "I promise to be dutiful to Mamma, and not to jump too near her."

As he got older, he began to love riding, and shooting, and games much better than books, and he longed for adventures and for fighting.

Now, because this Charles Edward Stuart was the grandson of James II., the Jacobites began to hope he might win back the throne of England, and when he grew up he resolved to try.

He left Rome, and travelled across France in disguise. Then he crossed the sea, and landed in the northern part of Scotland. This part is called the Highlands, because of the mountains. It was a bleak island where Charles landed, and the air was fresh; but as it was August, the hills were clothed with purple heather. "Prince" Charles, as the Scots called him, did not at all mind going to the hut of a poor Highlander to lodge. He sat by a

fire on a heap of peat-moss, and ate a simple supper of fish and vegetables without any bread.

After a few days, Charles had gathered about a thousand men ; he set up his standard on a little hill, and told them what he hoped to do. Then the men tossed their caps into the air, and shouted for Prince Charlie.

As the little army marched southward, more and more men joined it, and many towns opened their gates. At last they reached Edinburgh. Charles saw the high rocks of "Arthur's Seat" rising against a windy sky, and the grey sea beyond ; below it, he saw the grey towers of the old Palace of Holyrood, where his forefathers had lived and suffered. Crowds came out to see the Prince ; they looked with joy at the tall, slender man with ruddy hair and large brown eyes ; at his Highland dress of red breeches, tartan plaid, and blue cap, with its white cross of St. Andrew ; the star of St. Andrew was on his breast. For several nights he held a court in the great bare halls of Holyrood ; all who came there loved him for his bright smile and brave words.

So he marched away southwards, conquered an English army that tried to stop him, and entered England by Carlisle. But in England no man joined him. He marched on southward to

Lancashire, and winter drew on. Then the Highlanders began to murmur, for they wanted to attend to their farms; even some of the officers feared to advance. So, at Derby, Charles decided, in bitterness of heart, to march back to Scotland.

It was a sad retreat; the weather was cold and wet; food was bad and scarce; men were deserting every day; an English army was pursuing them. But the Prince marched on foot, even when he was ill, and he shared all the hardships. At last, on a cold Scotch moorland, called Culloden, Charles and his army turned to meet the English. The Highlanders were worn out with marching, and starving for want of food; the English were fresh, and had better guns.

The Highlanders stood, at first, in solid squares, but the English guns mowed down hundreds at a time. Then, with wind and snow in their faces, the Highlanders rushed madly on their enemies; they slashed and hewed their way through the gunners, but they were cut to pieces by the bayonets of those who waited beyond. Charles tried to bring back his men; it was too late; hundreds fled to the hills; hundreds were taken prisoners. When no more could be done, a Scotch officer seized Charles' horse by the bridle and dragged him away.

Then Prince Charles had to flee for his life. The

English Government offered £30,000 to any one who would deliver him up. Throughout the spring and summer of 1746, English soldiers hunted for the Prince, and treated the poor Highlanders most cruelly. The crops were destroyed, farms were burnt, families turned out to starve, men and women were even flogged to make them tell what they knew. But none betrayed their Prince, in spite of all they suffered.

As for Charles, he was journeying from one island to another, off the western coast of Scotland. Here also the English were watching and searching; English vessels lay off the coasts of the islands, and soldiers moved about in small parties, beating the heather and spying into every cave and every hovel. Charles, and his few companions, were often nearly starved, and they slept in the cold and wet; but Charles was always merry; and when they had food, he was the best cook of them all.

After two months, his pursuers were closer on his track; day by day, he expected to be caught. It was like a terrible game of hide and seek, where a man's life was at stake.

One June evening, he and one companion came to a hut on a lonely moor. It seemed empty; they crept stealthily inside. By the moonlight, they saw the figure of a young girl sitting by a turf fire,

"YOUR HIGHNESS, I AM FLORA MACDONALD."

on which she was cooking something in an iron pot. An old sheep-dog lay near her, as though protecting her. She rose at once and knelt before Charles. "Your Highness," she said, "I am Flora Macdonald: my family is true to you. In two days, this island will not be safe for you, as we know the soldiers will be here next. For days, I have been waiting to warn you. I have a plan, if you will trust me." "I will surely trust you, fair mistress," said Charles. "Then, your Highness," said Flora, "you must dress as 'Betty Burke,' an Irish girl, famous for her spinning, and come with me to my mother's house in the next island. Meet me to-morrow at the shepherd's hut near the sea."

So, at the meeting-place, next day, Charles put on a gown of sprigged linen and a long cloak, like an Irish girl. They crossed the narrow bit of sea to the Isle of Skye, and tramped away to Mrs. Macdonald's house. "Betty Burke" looked so tall and lanky, she took such long strides, and clutched so awkwardly at the hood of her cloak that the country-folk laughed and pointed at the strange creature as she passed them.

At night they reached the Macdonalds' house. There, for the first time for many months, Charles enjoyed a good supper and a clean bed.

In a few days' time, when they knew that the

soldiers had left that district, Charles took to his wanderings again. In September, he was at last able to escape from Scotland in a French ship, and he sailed safely to the coast of Brittany.

Thus, in spite of English gold, he had been safe for five months among his faithful Highlanders.

Charles Edward never tried again to win the throne of England ; and when he died, there was no other Stuart left to whom the Jacobites could turn.

THE STORY OF CAPTAIN COOK

Early in the reign of King George II., a lad called James Cook was living quietly in a little Yorkshire village. All round his native village were the beautiful North Yorkshire moors, covered with heather. James Cook learned to work on a farm with his father, to bring in the cows from pasture, to drive the ploughshare, and to help with the hay and corn harvest. But when he was thirteen years old, he went to work in a draper's shop in the village of Staithes by the sea ; here, he could see the ships sail by and watch the waves of the sea break upon the rocks, and hear the sea-winds blow. And then he began to long to be a sailor. After some years, his father said he might go to sea.

About nine miles away, at the mouth of a little river, lay the ancient seaport town of Whitby. Inland stretched the purple heather-covered moors. On the high hill above the town stood the grey ruin of the ancient monastery, reminding men of the older monastery of the Abbess Hilda and of Cædmon. Down the hillside and along the river mouth clustered the little red-brick, red-roofed houses of

fishermen and sailors; the harbour was full of ships and boats. From here, sailed the ships which went to hunt for whales, and also many coaling-ships which carried coals from Newcastle to London and other towns.

So one day, James Cook walked to Whitby by the

"THOU SHALT BEGIN ON ONE OF MY SHIPS."

cliff path, and entered the office of Mr. Walker, a shipowner, whose ships traded with coal, up and down the coast. When Mr. Walker saw the tall, strong lad with honest brown eyes and firm mouth, he said, "Well, my lad, if thou wishest to be a

sailor, thou shalt begin on one of my ships." That night, James went on board, and soon took voyages up and down the eastern coast of England.

He was eighteen years old, but he had a great deal to learn. He had to climb the rigging when the ship was tossing madly in a stormy sea, and when his own head swam with sea-sickness. He had to keep watch on deck during dark nights in bitter cold and rain, and to live on salt meat and mouldy biscuit. Above all, he had to be brave and silent when he was kicked and cuffed, even for doing his duty. But James minded nothing so long as he was at sea.

Whenever his ship came back to Whitby, James went to see his master. In Mr. Walker's house lived a person who was always glad to welcome him, and this was the housekeeper who looked after it, because Mr. Walker had no wife. She was a motherly soul, and dearly loved her "honey James," as she called James Cook.

In ten years' time, James Cook had risen to be a mate—that is, an officer next in rank to the captain of a ship. But he was still serving on quiet little ships which carried coal and other goods along the coast. What he wanted was to serve on one of His Majesty's ships. So one day, on the banks of the Thames, he walked into a public-house, where

he saw a man trying to persuade young fellows to serve in the Navy ; and Cook was taken.

The King's ships had to sail far over the ocean, to protect the merchant ships from pirates who might attack them, or from ships of foreign nations. They carried great guns, and men to fight, as well as men to sail the ship. The Captain of a navy ship had to command the fighting, but the sailing of the ship was managed by an officer called the Master of the ship, who served under the Captain.

At first, James Cook served as an ordinary sailor. But soon after he joined the Navy, a great war broke out between France and England, and there was much work for the King's ships to do. Cook worked so well that in four years he rose to be Master of a ship. This was the very year in which young James Wolfe was made general over a British army, to fight the French in Canada. James Wolfe was only thirty-two, and James Cook was only thirty-one. Cook's ship was sent out to the river St. Lawrence, in the fleet which went to help General Wolfe.

James Cook was never satisfied with what he knew ; he was always trying to learn more. In those days, ships were often wrecked when they came near land, or when they sailed up rivers, because no one had carefully measured how deep

the water was, or had drawn the shape of the land correctly on a map. Thus, ships often ran aground on hidden sand-banks, or ran into rocks and headlands on dark nights. Cook studied how to find the depth of waters, and how to measure the shape of the land, and he learned to mark these things correctly on a map or chart for other sailors to use.

The river St. Lawrence was very difficult to steer through, and the depth of its waters was not known to the English, so James Cook was employed to make charts of the river-channel. So well did he do this work, that even to-day his charts are kept as being correct. It was dangerous work, because Cook and the men who helped him had to work in small boats, and they were often chased by the French and by the North-American Indians, who helped the French. One night some Indians nearly caught Cook ; he rowed to shore, and they jumped into one end of his boat as he jumped on land from the other. All this was going on while General Wolfe was besieging Quebec.

Not long after this, Cook was put in command of a ship called the *Endeavour*, with orders from the Government to explore the Pacific Ocean. This ocean was very little known in those days. Even the great continent of Australia, and the big islands of New Zealand, were scarcely marked upon the

map, since only little bits of their coasts had ever been seen by sailors, and none had landed. Many sailors, since the days of Francis Drake, had sailed right across the Pacific, calling at some of the little islands where the dark South Sea Islanders live. There are thousands and thousands of these little islands in the great Pacific Ocean ; but only a few had been visited. The sailors thought that since there were so many islands, there must be a great continent of dry land not far off. They remembered Christopher Columbus, and how he had discovered the unknown continent of North America. The British Government determined to try to find out the unknown continent in the South Pacific Ocean, if it were really there, and to have a careful map made of the Pacific for the use of British ships. This was what James Cook was now ordered to do. He was chosen because of his skill in making maps of unknown seas.

The *Endeavour* left Deptford in July, 1768, and steered south-westward to South America. She made for the cold Straits of Magellan, where Drake had struggled through. Here the cold was intense ; two of the crew were frozen to death on the shore.

Then they steered north-westwards, and came to islands in hot seas, where dark-skinned people lived. At every island, these people came swarming

round the ship in little boats, selling their fish and fruit. Cook's men took their goods, and gave English things in return, and when they landed in these places, they had many dealings with the natives. But Cook, unlike most sailors of those days, treated these natives very kindly, and made his men treat them kindly too. So the natives loved him.

On and on the *Endeavour* sailed, for thousands and thousands of miles; all the way, her Commander was watching, and measuring, and mapping what he saw. But nowhere could they find the great unknown continent. All along the coasts of the New Zealand Islands they went, and along the eastern side of the great Australian land, threading their way among coral reefs, where they were nearly wrecked. Over and over again, the good ship was damaged, and with difficulty and patience they mended her. Thus, thousands of islands, hitherto unknown, were marked on the map for the first time, and the New Zealand coast and the eastern coast of Australia were clearly marked.

The most wonderful thing that Cook did at this time was to keep his men free from scurvy, the worst sickness from which in those days sailors suffered. It arose partly from eating salt meat and few vegetables, partly from damp and dirt on board ship. Cook was determined to get rid of this

disease, so, whenever he possibly could, he took in stores of fresh fruit and of green stuff; he gave strict orders about what his men were to eat and drink; if they disobeyed, they were punished. He ordered the sailors to scrub and dry the boards of the ship, and to wash their own bodies properly every day. So it used to be said, "Every day is Sunday on board of Captain Cook."

In July, 1771, the *Endeavour* reached England. The King sent for Cook, and thanked him for having discovered more of the land in the Pacific Ocean than any one before. He was made a Captain in the Royal Navy. The greatest men were proud to meet him, but he never seemed proud of himself.

Cook now visited his old home in Yorkshire. The Whitby folk welcomed him proudly, especially his first master, Mr. Walker. The old housekeeper who had loved him as a boy, forgot that he was now a Captain in His Majesty's Navy. She just opened her arms wide and cried out, "Oh, honey James, how glad I am to see thee!"

After this, Cook was sent by the Government to the frozen regions of the South Pole, to look once more for the unknown continent.

There, the ship was wrapped in fogs and snow-storms, and surrounded with floating ice. Icicles

hung on the men's hair and on their noses. Fresh food was most difficult to get ; yet not one man died of scurvy in that whole voyage.

From this voyage, Cook proved that there was no habitable southern land.

After a short time at home, Cook started on his third voyage. He was to try to find a way to Europe round North America. But they could not find it, and after a time they sailed southward. Then they reached the South Sea Islands once more, where they knew the natives well. This time, they had trouble with the natives ; quarrels arose, because things were stolen from the ships. A boat was stolen, and Captain Cook determined to get it back. He knew that the natives loved him, and he determined to trust them. So he took a party of armed sailors, and landed near the house of the native chief. He tried to persuade the chief to help him. Then a crowd of natives began to fight with the sailors. Cook ordered his men back to the boats, for he did not wish to hurt the natives. He followed his men, but still talking to the chief. Suddenly, a native stabbed him in the back ; another struck him with a club ; then numbers of natives sprang upon him and beat him till he was dead.

When the boat's crew saw what was done, they

III Captain Cook and the native Chief (*page* 118)

rowed back to the ship and told that terrible thing. No one spoke in answer; there was a long, long silence. For though Cook had been a stern commander, and drove his people hard, they loved him with all their hearts.

Then one said, "Let us punish those natives"; but the others said, "No, our Captain would not punish them; we must do as he would wish."

So they sailed away sadly to England, leaving behind them the body of one of the greatest Englishmen who ever lived.

But some time afterwards, when an English missionary called Ellis visited those islands, he met natives who remembered the death of Cook. They told Mr. Ellis the real reason why he had been killed. It was this. The people of the island at first believed Cook to be one of their gods, returned after a long absence, and they began to worship him; when they found he did not do the things they expected their god to do, they became angry and suspicious. Thus their love for him was changed, and they rose against him, and killed him, only through a terrible mistake.

In a country rectory in Norfolk, not far from the sea, there once lived a little boy called Horatio Nelson. He was born about the time when James Cook first became a sailor in His Majesty's fleet. He had a happy quiet life, playing about the garden and the village with his five elder brothers. When he was twelve years old, his uncle, Captain Suckling, of the Royal Navy, came to visit Horatio's father.

He said one day : " I am soon going to sea in a fine ship ; suppose I take one of you boys with me, and make a sailor of him ! " The elder boys cried out all together, " Horatio ! Take Horatio ! He longs to be a sailor." But their uncle looked at Horatio's small, slight figure, and his pale face, and said, " What has poor Horatio done that he should be sent to rough it at sea ? Why, he looks far more weakly than any of you ! "

" Ah ! but he's brave," said his brothers ; " there's nothing he's afraid of."

And Horatio said, " Please let me go to sea " ; so to sea he went.

He was at first a midshipman, that is to say, he was an officer of the lowest rank in the Navy. Then he asked to serve for one year in a merchant ship ; during that time he did the roughest work with the roughest sailors, although he was not really strong in body.

After this, he went to the Arctic seas, and bore that bitter cold, though he was not yet fifteen years old. Three years later, he rose to be Lieutenant, and then he went on a voyage to Jamaica. From Jamaica, he was sent home so weak from fever that he could hardly stand, but all his talk was of his next ship.

When he recovered from this illness, he was made

a full Captain, and given the command of a ship. He was then only twenty-three years old.

Those who served under him loved him; he really cared for his sailors, and spent his time and strength in seeing that they had good food and water, dry beds, and warm blankets. He used to ask the youngest midshipmen to breakfast with him, and he shared their jokes like a boy. But he was quick and stern to punish wrong-doing; in those days men were punished by severe flogging, or by imprisonment in irons, or even by being hanged from the yard-arm.

Now, when Nelson had served for twenty-two years in the Royal Navy, and was thirty-four years old, fearful news reached Britain from France. Like the English in the days of Charles I., the French had cut off the head of their King, Louis XVI., and had done the same to their beautiful Queen, Mary Antoinette, and had declared that they would not have Kings to reign over them. And they cut off the heads of hundreds of the nobles and gentlemen of France. Next year, they said they would help the people of other countries to put an end to Kings and to nobles. And this was called the French Revolution. Every country in Europe feared that the French would march upon them, and begin putting men to death. And so a terrible war broke out, in which almost all the nations of

Europe joined. This war lasted for many years, so that children who were born in the year when it began, were grown-up men and women when it ended. At first, it seemed as if France would be beaten, with so many countries fighting against her. But a young soldier, named Napoleon Bonaparte, saved France, and led the armies of France to victory. And the French were so proud of him that they made him Emperor, and greater than a King. Then it seemed as if Napoleon Bonaparte would conquer all Europe. The great country of Spain joined him in fighting; the two fleets of France and Spain sailed the seas, and attacked the peaceful merchant ships of other countries. Only Britain and the British fleet were left to fight against him, and if they were defeated, Napoleon and the French could do what they liked with the rest of Europe.

In this great war, Nelson fought with splendid bravery and skill; always he showed the same love for his men. One day, two Spanish ships were chasing Nelson's ship, the *Minerva;* the Spaniards were close upon her, when a sailor fell overboard from the *Minerva.* At once a boat was lowered to rescue him, Lieutenant Hardy in charge; but the sailor had sunk and could not be found, so the boat tried to catch up the *Minerva;* one Spanish ship was close upon it. "By Heaven," cried

Nelson, "I'll not lose Hardy"; so, in spite of the *Minerva's* own danger, he slackened speed and waited for Hardy's boat. By good luck, the Spaniards thought that other English ships were coming, and at once turned back.

In some of this fighting, Nelson lost the sight of one eye. Later on, he was leading an attack by night, when a bullet struck his elbow; he fell back faint; but when he reached his ship and the sailors wanted to lift him on board, he said indignantly, "I've got my legs left, and one arm." Then he clambered up holding by one hand. Ten minutes afterwards, his wounded arm was cut off by the surgeon; in those days there was nothing to deaden the pain.

Nelson had become an Admiral before he was forty years old, and as the war got more and more serious, he was given command of the whole fleet in the Mediterranean Sea. He now saw that the French and Spanish fleets must be destroyed, and that the English fleet must do it.

He went to England for a few weeks to see the Government, and in September, 1805, he sailed from Portsmouth in his great ship *Victory*. Thousands of people gathered to see him go; the men and women cheered and wept, as they watched the slight, small figure, with the empty sleeve across

NELSON STOOD WAVING.

the breast. Nelson stood waving his cocked hat with his left hand, till the black hull slipped away below the grey horizon.

Then for three weeks Englishmen waited for news. There were no telegrams in those days, nor any steamships, so that few messages could come from abroad. Therefore, men learned to wait with greater patience and silence than we do now. But they all knew that it would depend on Nelson's skill and courage whether the French would be beaten or not; and if the French were not beaten, the French Emperor might conquer Europe. This was why Nelson at that time was the most important man to England.

* * * * *

It was October 21st, 1805, a still, misty morning, with little wind at sea. In Trafalgar Bay, the English fleet, in two narrow columns, faced the long crescent line of French and Spanish ships.

Everything was ready on board the English ships; Nelson went down to his cabin, and, lest he should be killed, he wrote down his last wishes for his friends at home. He also wrote in his diary, "To God I resign myself, and the just cause which I have to defend."

Then he went on deck with Captain Hardy, his old friend, and called to another officer, "I want to

send a message to all the fleet." The officer took the message, and made a signal with flags so that all could see; when they spelt it out, they read these words :—

"England expects that every man will do his duty."

And English sailors have never forgotten that last message of Nelson's.

It was twelve o'clock, and Nelson's ship the *Victory* led the attack. Firing began from both fleets, and soon the air was thick with smoke; the roar of guns was deafening. Hundreds of men on both sides fell dying and dead; sometimes men fought hand to hand on board their enemy's ship.

About one o'clock, Nelson was standing on the deck of the *Victory;* a French ship, the *Redoutable*, was close, and firing quick upon her. Men and officers fell fast around Nelson; a shot passed between himself and Hardy. The *Victory's* sails were torn, her top-mast shot away. She was sending a storm of cannon shot into the *Redoutable;* but high up, in the rigging of the French ship, there were musketeers marking carefully that slim figure in blue and white, with gold epaulettes, and empty sleeve across the breast.

Suddenly a shot struck Nelson's shoulder; he

fell, and Hardy knelt over him. "They've done for me at last, Hardy; my backbone is shot through," he said.

They carried him below, and laid him on a bed in a little dark room; surgeons did what they could, but the wound was deadly. Then Nelson sent Hardy on deck to give orders to the ships, for "I will command while I live," he said.

The men who loved him came one by one to see him for the last time; then back to the terrible deck to carry out his orders.

The battle drew to an end; the French ships were all captured, or sunk, or in flight; the English had done their work, but at a great price.

"It is well," said Nelson; "thank God, I have done my duty." Towards four o'clock he got very weak. "Kiss me, Hardy," he said; and Hardy knelt down to kiss his cheek. There was silence again, and once more Nelson spoke, "Thank God I have done my duty." At half-past four he passed peacefully away.

* * * * *

They brought his body to England, and laid it with honour in St. Paul's Cathedral.

The war was not yet over; it raged for ten years more. But Nelson had saved the British people

from the French, and by saving Britain he had saved the other peoples of Europe. They rose against Napoleon, one after another, helped by Britain, until at last he was defeated at the Battle of Waterloo, and later, taken prisoner. And because of Nelson, the British Navy was strong; and peaceful merchant ships could cross the ocean, and farmers could till the fields at home in Britain, without fear of the French.

The poet Newbolt has written these words :—

"Effingham, Grenville, Raleigh, and Drake,
Here's to the bold and free!
Benbow, Collingwood, Byron, Blake,
Hail to the Kings of the sea!
Admirals all, for England's sake,
Honour be yours and fame!
And honour, as long as waves shall break
To Nelson's peerless name!"

END OF BOOK III.

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PIERS PLOWMAN HISTORIES

EXERCISES ON BOOK III

CHAPTER I

1. Look at the picture on page 6, and write down what the different people are doing, and who they are.

2. How was it that the men who lived in the fen-country were "a brave and patient race of men"?

3. Why did Hereward the Wake fight against King William?

4. Why was Hereward called "The Wake"? Why was his mare called "Swallow"?

5. How was it that King William and Hereward became friends at last?

6. Find out what King of England in Saxon times went disguised into his enemy's camp.

CHAPTER II

1. Let Matilda tell her own story, calling herself "I."

2. Why did Stephen refuse to be ruled by Matilda? Why did they fight against each other so long?

3. Describe what you see in the picture on page 11. Would you like, or not, to have been little Matilda at that solemn moment ? Give your reason.

4. What is happening to Matilda in the picture on page 16 ? How does she feel, do you think ?

CHAPTER III

1. In what country is Jerusalem ? Why is that country very sacred to Christian people ? Why is Jerusalem called the Holy City ?

2. What made the Kings of Europe wish to go and fight against Saladin and his followers ?

3. Look at the coloured picture which is between pages 26 and 27. Who is the man on horseback covering his face ? Why is he covering it ?

4. What sort of man was Saladin ? Give reasons for what you say.

5. Describe the sort of country that Palestine is.

CHAPTER IV

1. Suppose Robert the Bruce to be telling his own story to his little son. Write down what he would say.

2. Look at the little picture in black and white at the top of page 26 and write down who the two men are, and what each is doing.

3. Read again page 47. Why, do you think, did Bruce only *pretend* to drink on that evening ?

And why was the message he received not a written message ?

4. The Scots are very proud of the memory of Robert Bruce, and also of the Battle of Bannockburn ; why should they be so proud ?

CHAPTER V

1. What made the poor folk of Kent want to go to London and see the King in the days of Richard II ? How did they expect him to help them ?

2. Imagine some friend of Wat Tyler returning to his village. Write down what he would say as he told to Wat's family the story of what had happened in London.

3. Look at the picture on page 40. Write down who is the man on the horse, and what you think he is saying to the people round him.

4. On page 39 you read : " So the men of Kent went back to their villages comforted because they had seen their King." What had he said which comforted them ?

5. On page 41 you read that the King's mother said to him on the evening of that day : " Fair son, what pain and anguish I have had for thee this day." What made her have " pain and anguish " ?

CHAPTER VI

1. Why was France so "torn asunder" in the days when Joan of Arc lived ?

What made her wish to become a soldier ?

2. What is Joan doing in the picture on page 44 ?

Was her childhood a happy one, or not ?

3. What do you think of King Charles of France as he is described in this story ?

4. All over France nowadays there are chapels and statues in memory of Joan of Arc ; what does this show about the feelings of the French towards her ?

How do we English feel about her, now, do you think ?

CHAPTER VII

1. For what two objects did Columbus desire to cross the great ocean ?

2. In what ways did he show himself to be a patient, a brave, and a religious man ?

3. Suppose yourself to have been one of the men who sailed with Columbus, and tell the story of what happened when the ships reached the islands which he called West Indies.

4. Look at the picture on the top of page 54, and then at the big picture on page 58 ; then, write down which you think is the front and which the back of the ship on page 54.

In the coloured picture what is Columbus looking at ? And what is he saying to himself ?

EXERCISES ON BOOK III

CHAPTER VIII

1. Write down the two ways in which, very long ago, men were taught about religion.

2. What changes did many people wish to make in Church services about the time of Cranmer ?

3. Describe everything you see in the picture on page 64, and write what you think Cranmer is doing.

4. Do you think that Archbishop Cranmer was a brave man or not ? Say why you think as you do, after reading page 67.

CHAPTER IX

1. Write down that part of the story of Sir Walter Raleigh which you like best, and say why you like it.

2. What was the chief work of Raleigh's life ? In what ways was he like Columbus ?

3. Describe Raleigh as he is shown in the picture on page 174, and write what you learn about him from this picture.

4. Imagine Raleigh sailing back to England for the last time, after his son's death. Write down some of his thoughts.

CHAPTER X

1. " Please to remember the 5th of November,
The gunpowder treason and plot."

Do you think it is a good thing that English people

should say this old rhyme? Give reasons for your answer.

2. Describe the picture on page 83 and say what is happening.

3. What do you really think of Guy Fawkes as a man?

CHAPTER XI

1. What was the Covenant? Why did the Scots care so much about it?

2. Let Montrose tell the story of his flight after his last defeat till he reached Edinburgh.

3. Describe what is happening in the picture on page 91. Is it a scene of happiness or of sorrow? Give a reason for your answer.

CHAPTER XII

1. If you are a London child, write down in what ways the London that you know is different from the London that Mr. Pepys knew.

2. If you have never been to London, write down what were the bad things of old London as described in this chapter.

3. Describe what you see in the picture on page 97, and then write down what is happening in the houses which have a cross on the door; who is the man standing on the left, and what he is standing there for?

4. A gentleman called Mr. Evelyn lived on the south side of the Thames in the days of the Great Fire. Pretend that you are Mr. Evelyn, and write what you see across the river on the Sunday morning after the Saturday night mentioned on page 99.

CHAPTER XIII

1. Imagine yourself standing in a street in Edinburgh among the crowd who watched Prince Charlie; write down some of your thoughts.

2. Describe what is happening in the scene shown on page 107; write down who the people are. Do the same with the tiny picture on page 102.

3. Why was Prince Charles so hunted by the English Government that he had to go about disguised?

CHAPTER XIV

1. Let James Cook tell the story of his life as a boy down to the time when he first went to sea.

2. What difficulties of his life at sea would James Cook tell the old housekeeper when he went to see her?

3. What very important work did Captain Cook do after he became Captain of the "Endeavour"?

4. Describe what is happening in the picture on page 119 and say what terrible event it led to.

5. In what ways did Captain Cook show that he cared for the men whom he commanded?

CHAPTER XV

1. In what ways were Captain Cook and Nelson like each others as boys ? And in what ways were they alike as Captains of ships ?

2. Name all the men who were sailors of whom you read in this book, and then say which of their stories you like best, and why.

3. Look at the picture on page 125 and write down the reason why Nelson is waving his hat with his *left* hand.

4. We still remember October 21st as a great day ; why is this ?

Why is Nelson buried in St. Paul's Cathedral ?

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